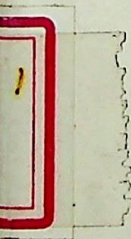




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# Abhicāra Rites in The Veda



**Purna Chandra Sahoo**

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पुस्तकालय

गुरुकुल काँगड़ी विश्वविद्यालय, हरिद्वार

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लेखक SAHOO, PURNA CHANDRA

शीर्षक Abhicare Rites in

the vedas

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गुरुकुल काँगड़ी विश्वविद्यालय, हरिद्वार  
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आदि न लगायें।



पुस्तकालय  
गुरुकुल काँगड़ी विश्वविद्यालय, हरिद्वार

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पुस्तक विवरण की तिथि नीचे अंकित है। इस तिथि सहित ३० वें दिन यह पुस्तक पुस्तकालय में वापस आ जानी चाहिए अन्यथा ५० पैसे प्रतिदिन के हिसाब से विलम्ब दण्ड लगेगा ।



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## **ABHICĀRA RITES IN THE VEDA**

ARHICARA RITES IN THE VEDA





# ABHICĀRA RITES IN THE VEDA

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By

Purna Chandra Sahoo



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Heartily thanks are also due for the parents, teachers, colleagues and friends of the author and some other individuals as well as Institutions who helped the author directly or indirectly for the completion of the thesis and publication of the same.

**The Author**

**(Purna Chandra Sahoo)**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|                |   |  |
|----------------|---|--|
| AB             | - | Aitareya Brāhmaṇa  |
| Abgd. ed.      | - | abridged edition   |
| ABORI          | - | Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona            |
| AOS            | - | American Oriental Society, New Haven                               |
| ĀpGS           | - | Āpastamba Gṛhya Sūtra  |
| Āp Mantrapāṭha | - | Āpastamba-Mantrapāṭha  |
| ĀpŚŚ           | - | Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra   |
| ĀśvGS          | - | Āśvalayana Gṛhya Sūtra   |
| ĀśvŚŚ          | - | Āśvalayana Śrauta Sūtra  |
| AV             | - | Atharva Veda   |
| AV Par         | - | Atharva Veda Pariśiṣṭa   |
| BD             | - | Bṛhat Devatā   |
| BDCRI          | - | Bulletin of Deccan College Research Institute, Poona               |
| BhŚŚ           | - | Bhāradvāja Śrauta Sūtra  |
| BRMIC          | - | Bulletin of Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta     |
| BŚŚ            | - | Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra  |
| CASS           | - | Centre of Advanced Studies in Sanskrit, University of Poona, Poona |
| ERE            | - | Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics                               |
| GB             | - | Gopatha Brāhmaṇa   |

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| HOS      | - Harvard Oriental Series                                       |
| HŚS      | - Hiranyakeśi Śrauta Sūtra                                      |
| IHQ      | - Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta                         |
| IPC      | - Indian Philosophy and Culture, Vrindavan                      |
| JAOS     | - Journal of the American Oriental Society, New Haven           |
| JB       | - Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa  |
| JKU (H)  | - Journal of the Karnataka University (Humanities), Dharwar     |
| JUB      | - Journal of the University of Bombay, Bombay                   |
| KapS     | - Kapiṣṭhala Kaṭha Saṁhitā                                      |
| KauS     | - Kauśikagrhya Sūtra  |
| KB       | - Kauṣitaki Brāhmaṇa  |
| KS       | - Kaṭhaka Saṁhitā   |
| KŚS      | - Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra  |
| LŚS      | - Lātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra  |
| MS       | - Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā  |
| MŚS      | - Mānava Śrauta Sūtra   |
| N and FM | - New and Full Moon (sacrifice)                                 |
| OH       | - Our Heritage, Sanskrit College, Calcutta                      |
| PAIOC    | - Proceedings of the All India Oriental Conference, BORI, Poona |
| Pr Bh    | - Prabuddha Bhārata, Mayavati                                   |
| PVB      | - PañcaViṁśa Brāhmaṇa   |
| RV       | - Ṛg Veda   |
| RV Khila | - Ṛg Veda Khila   |
| Ṣaḍ VB   | - Ṣaḍ Viṁśa Brāhmaṇa  |
| ŚB       | - Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa  |



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|-------|---|
| SBE   | - Sacred Books of the East  |
| ŚŚS   | - Sāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra   |
| SV    | - Sāma Veda   |
| SVB   | - Sāma Vidhāna Brāhmaṇa   |
| TĀ    | - Taittirīya Āraṇyaka   |
| TB    | - Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa   |
| TMB   | - Tāṇḍya Mahā Brāhmaṇa  |
| (tr.) | - (translation)   |
| TS    | - Taittirīya Saṁhitā  |
| VIJ   | - Vishveshvarānanda Indological Journal,<br>Vishveshvarananda Vedic Research<br>Institute, Hoshiarpur |
| VS    | - Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā  |
| WZKSA | - Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunde Süd-<br>Asiens und Archiv für Indische<br>Philosophie, Vienna          |
| YV    | - Yajur Veda  |

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## 1

## INTRODUCTION

The Vedas are supposed to be the first literary creations of the world and in this part of the Globe, these are considered as the most sacred as well as the source of all knowledge. As a matter of fact the Vedic literature contains a lot of material for the study of ancient Indian cultural history including the religious, philosophical, political, social and economic life of the then people. From the traditional point of view the Vedas are meant for the solemnized activities called *yajña* or sacrifice which is a means for ceremonially worshipping different divinities through prayer and offerings of pleasurable objects to them in order to obtain their blessings as well as to get various worldly desires fulfilled. These activities are broadly known as Vedic rituals, often included in the term Veda and considered as sacred as the Vedas. Thus the Vedic literature basically contains the mantras for prayers, injunctions and procedures for the performance of sacrifices or offering rituals. It will be interesting to note that the most infamous *abhicāra* is directly or indirectly associated with both the above contents of the Vedic literature, i.e. mantras and performances.

The word *abhicāra* means blackmagic in general. It is derived from the root 'car' (to move or to go) with the suffix 'ghañ' (in the sense of the state of action : *bhāve*) and with the prefix 'abhi'. Literary the word means "the action of moving towards or the action of moving forward". This ultimately refers to the enemy and therefore the word *abhicāra* stands for the magical activities in the form of Vedic



rituals done against an enemy.<sup>1</sup> One finds the use of the forms of abhi-car in the RV.(10.34.10), in the AV.(8.2.26, 10.1.9, 10.3.7, 11.1.22 and 19.9.9) and more frequently in the later Vedic texts.

There is general belief that Vedic religion is connected mainly with the worship of natural phenomena and obtainment of heaven. But really speaking this is only one aspect of the Vedic religion. Vedic religion is closely connected with many magical elements and it is often very difficult to separate these two from each other in the Vedic texts.<sup>2</sup> Theoretically, religion means belief in some superior powers beyond human capacity and propitiation of them through various means for the benefit of men. Magic, on the other hand emphasizes on elevating one's will power in order to keep control over the all-pervading powers and compelling them to serve according to one's desires. These two types of thinking are found side by side in the Vedic texts.<sup>3</sup> In the Vedic prayer as well as practices, both of these devices, i.e. propitiating and compelling the super human powers often coexist.

Abhicāra, standing for all types of harmful ritual practices, is an all pervading phenomenon in ancient Indian religious life and literature. It is found in all sorts of sacred texts in ancient India. Many times it is believed that abhicāra is found only in some parts of the AV. But it is revealed through a careful study of the Veda that abhicāra is present every where in the Vedic literature. Magic is generally divided in to white and black types, i.e. beneficent and maleficent respectively. Both these types of magic pervade the Vedic as well as later literature.

Here it is proposed to study on blackmagic or the maleficent rituals found in the Veda and for which the materials have been drawn from the Vedic literature as a whole. Rgvedic, Yajurvedic and Samavedic texts are not free from abhicāra.



Moreover, it is often incorrectly opined that abhicāra is limited to the sacrifice called *Śyena*. *Mīmāṃsā* texts<sup>1</sup> try to defend Vedic religion arguing that the Vedic texts do not themselves prescribe the performance of sacrifices like *Śyena* and consequently the abhicāra but only provide the way of performing the abhicāra for those who desire to perform it through the sacrifices like *Śyena*. An effort is made here to show that abhicāra is not limited to the sacrifices like *Śyena* only. Further more abhicāra in the Vedic literature is not always optional but at times obligatory also. In addition to the optional abhicāra rites like *Śyena* there are many obligatory rites forming the parts of some famous Vedic sacrifices like New moon and Full moon sacrifices or *Agniṣṭoma* sacrifice etc. which are described to be harmful to the enemy. One has to perform these rituals even if one does not desire to harm one's enemy. Thus blackmagic is often obligatory and contrary to the *Mīmāṃsā* doctrine. It is a part of the Vedic religion prescribed to be performed by the Vedic texts.

It is intended here to show how the abhicāra was an all pervading phenomenon in the Vedic religion and as such how it forms a very important and central part of the Vedic religion of the classes as well as of the masses. Such a study will throw a good light on the ancient Indian cultural life in general. Magic is basically a social problem and particularly the blackmagic is usually considered as contemptible. But in the form of abhicāra its inclusion in the Vedic ritual systems is really interesting. Thus it will be clear that the study of Vedic abhicāra will prove to be very much rewarding so far the socio-religious study of ancient India is concerned. Even though occasional studies on abhicāra have been made by the modern scholars, no systematic and comprehensive work has been done on this subject. Therefore, here it is an attempt in this direction. There are numerous abhicāra rites in both the branches of Vedic ritual namely *Śrauta* and *gṛhya* (domestic). The *Śrauta* ritual consists



of various Vedic sacrificial performances starting from the establishment of the sacred fires *agnyādhāna* up to the great Some-sacrifices. During the performances of these sacrifices two types of abhicāra rites are performed. One is obligatory and another is optional. The obligatory abhicāra rites constitute the parts of the Vedic sacrifices in general. The performers while performing various rites belonging to those sacrifices have to perform some abhicāra rites also. And it is said in the ritual texts that the performance of these particular rites brings harm to the enemy of the performer. As mentioned above, it is not necessary in these cases, that the performer should desire to do harm to his enemy. It is also not possible on the part of the performer to neglect or avoid the performance of such rites so that his enemy will not be affected, because the performance of these rites in their respective sacrifices is obligatory and any willful avoidance or unmindful negligence in this regard would amount to be a ritual fault which would further require to be procedurally atoned by the performer.

The optional abhicāra rites are to be performed occasionally during the performance of the Vedic sacrifices if the performers, i.e. the sacrificers and the priests desire to practise sorcery, or if they hate anybody and anybody hates them or if they want to cause any kind of harm to their enemies magically. In such cases the performers are instructed to perform some details of rites in a manner different from the normal performance, by introducing changes or modifications in the normal procedures (e.g. changes in the use of various objects and materials, in their quality, changes in the verbal utterances, recitations and chants, change in the place and time, sequence, direction etc.) to drop the performance of certain obligatory rites etc. In addition to these there are some special abhicāra rites to be performed during the performance of some Vedic sacrifices. There are also some special *iṣṭis*, animal sacrifices as well as



## Introduction

some optional Soma- abhicāra-sacrifices like *Śyena*, *śarīdamaśa* etc. meant for the desiring individuals to perform in order to harm their enemies. Interestingly enough one finds a provision of protection from the blackmagic performed by others which is again of the the nature of magical ritual known as *pratyabhicāra* or counter-blackmagic. It is belived to be more effective than the usual blackmagic or abhicāra in the sense that it not only protects the person against whom abhicāra has been performed but makes the practiced sorcery return back to its practiser and attack him. Thus the *pratyabhicāra* is both defensive and offensive.

The *grhya* or domestic ritual has a wider scope than its śrauta counterpart so far as the number of performers is concerned. Even the people who have not established the Śrauta fires can also perform the *grhya* rites. Thus a larger part of the society including women can perform the same. The abhicāra rites coming under the *grhya* rituals are mainly found in the Kauśika Gṛhya Sūtra. This text (Kau.Sū) belongs to the Atharvanic tradition and prescribes the domestic rituals in which the *mantras* from the AV are to be applied. A complete chapter in this text is devoted to the abhicāra or blackmagical rituals. In addition to this there is a counter blackmagical rite known as *kṛtyāpratiharāṇa* or counter-acting of *kṛtyā* (the personified blackmagic), and a lot of other harmful domestic rites are detailed. There are instructions for the performance of abhicāra rites at the time of battle in order to make the rival army terrify, flee away, annoy or to make confusion among them. Similarly some other blackmagical rites are to be performed by a woman against her cowives or by a husband against the paramour of his wife or to bring misfortune on a woman or to prevent a woman from giving birth to a male child or to make her sterile etc.

In the Vedic sacrificial performances three types of utterances are used. These are recitations of hymns or verses



(ṛcs) from the ṚV and AV., utterances of *yajus* formulas from the text of YV. and chanting of *sāmans* from the SV. In each of these three types of verbal utterances there are found a lot of blackmagical elements. The hymns from the ṚV and AV contain many references to blackmagic and counter blackmagic performed against enemies, demons and evil spirits. Gods and demons are said to take part in such blackmagical practices. Moreover many hymns and verses from these two texts are prescribed by some later texts like *Brāhmaṇas*, *Śrauta sūtras* and *Gṛhyasūtras* to be used in a number of blackmagical rites.

The *Yajus* formulas are usually uttered by the performers of Śrauta sacrifices, viz. priests and sacrificers accompanied with some manual rites. Many of such formulas are of the nature of commands given by the performers to gods or to the presiding deities of some sacrificial objects in order to do various harms to their enemies who hate them and whom they hate. In case of certain *Yajus* formulas the performers are found to proclaim to destroy, kill or bring some harm to their enemies with the help of any god or any sacrificial object or their manual actions etc. Some of the formulas are of the nature of announcements made by the performers to kill or destroy their enemies without taking anybody's help. Interestingly enough there are some formulas prescribed to be used in the blackmagical rites which, as far as their meaning is concerned have nothing to do with the blackmagic but they are to be used because they are prescribed to be used. There are also utterances of some meaningless words or sounds like *vaṣaṭ*, *vyāhṛtis* and *hirikāra* etc. Many times one has to utter the name of the enemy and his lineage.

The *sāmans* form a part of Vedic music and some of these are found to be used in the blackmagical rites. One reads certain stories narrated in the *Brāhmaṇa* texts showing the origin of some *sāmans* and these stories, by way of narration, indicate how the *sāmans* were used by mythical figures in order to destroy their enemies. Some other elements of Vedic



music like *stomas* and *viṣṭutis* are also said to be harmful and these are to be used in blackmagical rites.

There are many material objects used at the time of Vedic blackmagical performances. These are somehow thought to be endowed with some malignant powers and at times these are described to be so in the Vedic texts in order to support their prescription in blackmagical rituals. These power substances can be classified in to the following groups.

- (a) Animals and animal products like blood, urine, faeces, hair, skin or hide, milk, sweat, flesh and bone etc.
- (b) Trees, plants, grass and some tree products like leaf, grain, faggot of particular trees, roots etc.
- (c) Some sacrificial objects like fire, ghee, soma-cups, ladle or spoon, wooden sword, remnants of sacrificial offerings, sacrificial gifts etc.
- (d) Some abstract elements like colours and numbers, particular quarters or directions etc.
- (e) Miscellaneous power substances like water, food, drink, salt, stone, metal, dust from the foot print of enemy etc. used cloth, garland or ornament and so on.

It is noticed that knowledge and thought or meditation play an important role in the practise of the harmful rituals. According to the ritualists a person who knows about the enemy can have some control over him and can cause harm to him. Knowledge of certain ritual details is also helpful to destroy one's enemy. Many times the *Brāhmaṇa* texts narrate stories denoting the performances of some sacrifices, sacrificial rites or ceremonies, giving the characteristics of some such rites and sacrifices, discussing some mythological events, showing the origin of some *sāmans* and etymologies of certain ritual terms and then remark that the knower of such stories etc. can cause harm to his enemy. In some cases the performance with knowledge of such details is described to be effective in destroying the enemy. It is believed that



thought is more effective than speech and thought can bring contact between the thinker and the object of thought. During the performances of some blackmagical rites sometimes one has to think about the enemy or the thing belonging to the enemy against whom the rites are being performed in order to destroy him.

There are some peculiar physical activities believed to be magically effective and therefore such activities are often found to be prescribed in the performance of abhicāra rites. For example, heating something on the fire, circumambulating any object or animal with fire in hand, encircling any place or object, throwing something magically potent towards the enemy, touching and gazing at the enemy, pressing one's own fingers, pressing one's toes or any other limb on the ground or on any other part of one's body etc. Some of these actions are to be accompanied with the utterances of magical formulas which express the desire or declaration of the performer to burn, kill, eradicate or destroy the enemies.

There is a strong belief among the primitive people that certain places and some particular periods of time are inauspicious and something done or performed in such unholy places and times can create harm to the enemy. This belief is reflected in the Vedic abhicāra rites. In the counter-abhicāra rites also certain places and times play a significant role.

From the discussions in the Vedic texts one comes to know regarding the performers of abhicāra rites. These performers used to be many including the priests, sacrificers, kings and nobles, common men and women. There are occasions and provisions for the priests to perform abhicāra on behalf of the sacrificer against his enemies. At times if the priests are dissatisfied with their patron sacrificer or with their fellow priests they can bring harm on them through their magical rituals during the performance of sacrifices. The Brahman priest is supposed to have special powers to



perform blackmagical rites and to surpass all other priests of the *Śrauta* ritual. Similarly a *Śrauta* sacrificer is considered as a superhuman being having mystical power of his own. He can also practise *abhicāra* rites with the help of his mystic powers. In case of the *gṛhya* or domestic blackmagical practices these can be performed by common householders and women also. Some possible reasons for such practices are discussed followingly.

In the following pages all these above mentioned points are discussed in details. Thus the study aims at describing the phenomenon of blackmagic in its various aspects and illustrating an important side of the cultural life of the Vedic age that Vedic religious practices were not only god appeasing and desire fulfilling but also sometimes could be dangerous towards the life and property of the individuals involved in the same. People in the then society were not only godfearing and rule-abiding by nature but they were also highly ambitious, envious and covetous towards worldly possessions which led them to cause harm towards others either openly or secretly through their means of magical rituals.

### References

1. In *ŚabdaKalpadruma*, the meaning of this word is given – ‘activities done towards an enemy in order to kill him’, (*ābhimukhyena śatrubadhārtham cāraḥ kāryakaraṇm*). Sāyaṇa also means the same as *hiṃsā prayoga* (see his commentary on AV.8.2.26) *māraṇa karma* (AV.19.9.9).
2. Cf. Griswold, Religion of RV, p.337; for the relation between Magic and Religion in general see Frazer, J. G. The Golden Bough (abdg. Ed.) p.48 ff., Mauss, M. A General theory of Magic, p.12.
3. For magic in the Veda and Upaniṣads, p.379 ff; Gonda, Vedic Ritual, p.249.
4. For the points mentioned in these lines cf. G. U. Thite, “*Abhicāra*- rites and *Mīmāṃsā*” (unpublished paper)



## 2

ABHICĀRA RITES IN THE ŚRAUTA  
RITUAL

The blackmagical rites form a part of the Vedic rituals, both *Śrauta* and *Gṛhya*. There are many occasional harmful magical rituals which aim at bringing harm to the enemies of the participants of the *Śrauta* sacrifices and these abhicāra rites are performed during the normal course of the sacrificial performances. They are said to bring harm to the enemy. It should be noted here that the performer does not start these rites with any intention to get this result and such blackmagical results of these rites are in addition to some other results of the same. In other words during the performance of various sacrificial rituals the performers do carry out some normal rites without any desire to cause harm to their enemies through these rites but the effect of these rites are said in the ritual texts to be hurtful to the enemies of the performers though simultaneously similar rites can be beneficial to the performer in various ways. There are some other *Śrauta* rituals which are intentionally performed to hurt the enemies and therefore can be called optional abhicāra rites. In these rites the performers get their blackmagical results by making some changes or additions or omissions in their normal course of practices only. Besides these there are some other special *Śrauta* sacrifices exclusively meant for blackmagical results. Such special sacrifices can be divided in to two groups – (1) special blackmagical *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices. (2) special blackmagical Soma-sacrifices. In the following



different categories of the blackmagical rites are going to be detailed.

**(A) Normal Śrauta rites leading to the results against the enemy of the performers.**

In the normal course of the Vedic ritual system some rites are considered to be effective from the blackmagical point of view. While giving the eulogistic explanations of various rites the ritualists point out that some of these rites bring harms to the enemies of the performers. These are some regular rituals forming parts of various Śrauta sacrifices and neither the sacrifices nor any priest does necessarily desire to bring such blackmagical effects through these rites on their enemies. One can refer to some rites of offering coming in this category of obligatory harmful rituals.

For example, before killing the victim for Agni and Soma (*agnīṣomīyapaśu*) in a Soma sacrifice the priest has to offer a libation of ghee silently (*tūṣṇīmāghārāyati*) by which he is said to take away the sacrifice of the enemy of the sacrificer (TS. 6.3.7.2). The sacrificer gets this result after having started the sacrifice and performed the rite of the offering libations without any desire to get this result. The following cases are of the similar sort. The offering called *vaimṛdha* is a part of the Full Moon sacrifice in which a cake on eight potsherds is to be offered to the deity Indra, the driver away of enemies (*vaimṛdh*). This offering helps the sacrificer to drive away his enemies (TS. 2.5.3.1). According to the ŚB.11.1.3.2, by means of this offering the sacrificers lays all his scorers (*mṛdh*), all evil spirits. Similarly the after offerings (*anuyājas*) in the N and F Moon Sacrifices are to be offered so that the sacrificer drives away his wicked spiteful enemy (ŚB.11.2.7.26). When the after offerings are over the priest pours out the ghee attached to the spoon called *upabhṛt* and *juhū* in to the fire. This pouring down of the ghee enables the priests to make the spiteful enemy of the sacrificer pay tribute to the sacrificer (ŚB.1.8.2.17). The



*indraturīya* offering during the *Rājasūya* sacrifice leads the sacrificer to smite the fiends and Rakṣases (who symbolize the enemies) from the quarters. The same effect is mentioned for the sacrificer by the performance of the *pañcavātīya* offerings in the above sacrifice (ŚB.5.2.4.7). In the *cāturmāsya* sacrifices and particularly in the *sākamedha parvan* of the same, there is an offering called *mahāhaviḥ* or great-oblations, the performance of which enables the sacrificer to slay his spiteful enemy and gain victory (ŚB.2.5.4.1).

Ghee is an important oblation material frequently used in the sacrificial offerings and it is said to be identical with thunderbolt. Some times the offerings of ghee cause the performers to smite away the enemies and evil beings. Thus in a Soma sacrifice the priest has to offer ghee on the top of the remaining stem of the tree from which the upper part is cut off for preparing the sacrificial post out of the same. This offering is called *āvraścānahoma* or the offering at the cut point. By this offering the priest is said to repel the evil spirits (ŚB.3.6.4.15). Similarly, after digging a hole for the erection of the sacrificial post and before the rite of erection the priest offers ghee in to the hole which leads him to repel the evil spirits (ŚB.3.7.1.10). In both these cases the offering material ghee is described to be thunderbolt.

In Soma-sacrifices different *grahas* (cups for drawing soma-juices or the soma juices drawn in the respective cups<sup>1</sup> to be offered to different deities) are to be drawn and offered to various deities. While giving explanation about the drawing of *soma-grahas* the texts some times mention how they are harmful to the enemies of the performers. For example, when the *graha* called *antaryāma* is drawn the sacrificer obstructs his foes with the same (TS.6.4.6.1). It is said in TS.6.5.1.2 that by drawing the *ukthya graha* the priest makes the sacrificer capable of appropriating the strength and power of his foe. There are three *grahas* called *marutvātīya* belonging to Indra the *marutvān*. After being drawn these become identical with weapon and the



sacrificer, by the drawing of these cups in his sacrifice is said to hurt his foes (TS.6.5.5.1-2).

In the fire building rite (*cayana*) the priest puts different bricks at their respective places in different layers of the building. Placing of some bricks are said to be harmful to the enemy. In the fourth layer of the fire altar the bricks called *akṣṇayāstomīyā*, eighteen in number, are to be put in a confused manner.<sup>2</sup> This rite of putting bricks is meant for overcoming the foes and the sacrificer by doing this prospers while his foe is defeated (TS.5.3.3.1). In context of the putting of five *bhūyaskṛt* bricks in the fifth layer of the altar the same effect is achieved according to TS.5.3.11.2. And again in case of the putting of twenty two *indratanu* bricks in the fifth layer of the fire altar the result is said to be the same (TS.5.4.1.1). There is one brick called *vāmabhṛt* to be placed in the first layer which enables the sacrificer to take away the cattle of his enemy (KS.20.6 and KapS.31.8).

There are some rites in the sacrificial performances which can be described as imitative magical activities<sup>3</sup>. The performer performs the rites by throwing, cutting or killing some sacrificial objects or animals and according to the texts, by performing such rites the performer inflicts some harm on the enemy. For example, at the time of the preparation of the altar in the N. and FM sacrifices the priest cuts the roots of some grasses from the place for the altar. By cutting the root of the grasses he is supposed to cut the root of the enemy (TS.2.6.4.2; MS.4.1.10). In this context, according to the KS.31.8 and TB.3.2.9.10 the priest should cut the root with the help of the wooden sword (*sphya*) and that will lead to kill the Raksases. The priest throws the grass bush (*stambayajus*) three times from the altar in the direction of the rubbish heap. By this action thrice repeated he is said to make the enemy of the sacrificer deprived of these three worlds (TS.2.6.4.1-2; MS.4.1.10; KS.31.8; KapS.39.1 and TB.3.2.9.5-6). In the famous Horse sacrifice (*aśvamedha*) the sacrificial horse is taken to a water place for



taking bath and made to stand in the water. Then a four eyed dog is killed and the corpse of the dog is thrown below the feet of the horse. As the horse stands on the water the body of the dog is made to float on the water surface below the belly of the horse. This killing of the dog is said to be identical with the killing of the evil-rival of the sacrificer<sup>4</sup> (TB.3.8.4.1). Here the dog is supposed to represent the enemy of the sacrificer.

Some other rites which are also obligatory in course of the Vedic sacrifices are described as harmful to the enemies of the performers. In a Soma-sacrifice when the *tānunaptra* rite is performed the priest divides up the *tānunaptra* ghee or he takes up the ghee five times into the offering spoon. It is said that this division of ghee while taking in to the spoon helps the sacrificer to overcome his enemy. By this action the sacrificer is supposed to prosper and his enemy to be defeated (TS.6.2.2.2; GB.2.2.2). While drawing Soma-juice in to the cups at the first pressing of a Soma-sacrifice the priest has to put some *vasatīvarī* water in to the Hotr's cup and stir soma in this water for four times. According to MS.4.7.7, this action of the priest leads the sacrificer to appropriate the quarters of his enemy. In the *pravargya* ceremony when the *mahāvīra* pot is to be set down on the mound upon the burning reed-seaths, these reedseaths are to be kindled on both sides<sup>5</sup>. By doing this the priest is supposed to repel the Raksases and fiends from all the quarters (ŚB.14.1.3.16). Before the offering of the silent offerings in the N and FM sacrifices some enclosing sticks are put around the fire and this action leads to smite away the Raksases (TS.2.6.6.2). In all these rites one notices that the performances bring harm to the enemy of the sacrificer or to the evil beings in general whether the sacrificer desires this effect or not. These rites are obligatory in the sacrificial performances.

During the performances of sacrifices the sacrificer himself has to go through some obligatory rituals or the



priests perform some rituals in connection with the sacrificer and the results of these rites are of the similar nature. For instance, in the consecration ceremony (*dīkṣā*) of a Soma-sacrifice the sacrificer should anoint his eyes with collyrium. By doing the same he is supposed to take away the eye of his enemy (TS.6.1.1.5; KS.23.1; KapS.35.7). In the *cāturmāsya* sacrifices the sacrificer has to cut off his hair three times for the three *parvans* of the sacrifice. While cutting he has to separate the portion of the hair to be cut off from the portion which is not to be cut off. According to TB.1.5.6.5, these two actions lead the sacrificer to appropriate all the wealth (especially food) of his enemy by which the enemy is supposed to live on for one year and there by the enemy is said to suffer from hunger.

Some other important ceremonies constituting the parts of various Vedic sacrifices are also described to be causing harm to the enemy. There are four *parvans* namely *vaiśvadeva*, *varuṇapraghāsa*, *sākamedha* and *śunāśīrīya* constituting the *Cāturmāsya* sacrifices. After the performance of the *varuṇapraghāsa* only according to an injunction one should perform *sākamedha parvan*. By this the sacrificer can slay his wicked spiteful enemy and gain victory (ŚB.2.5.3.1). During the performance of the *Rājasūya* sacrifice the sacrificer has to perform the *sākamedha-parvan* of the *cāturmāsya* sacrifices which is said to enable him to kill his foe (ŚB.5.2.4.3). According to the TB.1.4.9.5, the sacrificer who performs the entire *cāturmāsya* sacrifices in the course of his performance of *Rājasūya* sacrifice defeats his foes and prospers himself. The *upasad* ceremony is an integral part of a Soma-sacrifice and its performance enables the sacrificer to drive away his foes. This ceremony is to be performed twice a day, viz. morning and evening, so that the sacrificer drives away his foes from day and night. (TS.6.2.3.4; MS.3.8.1; KS.24.10 and KapS.38.3). More over this ceremony is said to be identical with three fold thunderbolt as it contains three elements, (1) fifteen kindling verses, (2) two butter portions (*ājyabhāgau*) and (3) the offering verses as well



as the invitory verses in the *triṣṭubh* metre. Each of these are said to be thunderbolt and thus the entire ceremony becomes a threefold thunderbolt. By performing this ceremony the sacrificer pushes away the rival who hates him from these worlds (KB.7.2). Similarly due to the ceremony of purchasing of Soma plants in a Soma sacrifice the sacrificer can push away his rival who hates him from these worlds just like the gods doing the same pushed away the Asuras from these worlds (KB.7.10). Another ceremony called *avāntaradīkṣā* or intermediate consecration is performed in the first *upasad* day of a Soma-sacrifice. The sacrificer who undergoes through this ceremony is said to overcome his foes and prosper himself (TS.6.2.2.7).

*Abhicāra* practices through the sacrificial rituals can be neutralized by means of counter practices known as *pratyabhicāra* and some of the obligatory rituals are found to possess the power of counter black magic. No sorcery can be performed against the sacrificer or no practiced blackmagic can do harm to the sacrificer in whose sacrifice such counter blackmagical rituals are performed. On the other hand if anybody practices sorcery against the sacrificer then he himself has to suffer loss. In context of putting twelve *bhūteṣṭakā* bricks in the third layer of the fire-altar of the *cayana* sacrifice it is said in TS.5.6.3.1 that no blackmagic should be performed against the sacrificer or the builder of this fire altar (*agnicit*) because who so ever performs it against the same the practiced blackmagic turns upon that person and lays him low. These bricks are considered to remove all the possibilities of accidental death from the sacrificer. During the *Rājasūya* sacrifice there are twelve offerings called *pārtha homas* of which six are performed or offered before the consecration ceremony and the other six are offered after the consecration. On account of these twelve offerings offered on both sides of the consecration of the sacrificer he is said to be fully protected inside the hold of the gods. According to TB.1.7.7.5, one



should not practise sorcery (*abhicāra*) against this sacrificer. If anyone practices then the practiced *abhicāra* kills the practiser himself. These rites are of obligatory nature and must be performed during one's sacrificial performances even when one does not know whether anybody is practicing blackmagic against him. But the normal performance of these rites not only saves the sacrificer automatically from the blackmagical effects but also causes harm to the enemy or the practiser through their counter effective power. Thus such rites can be defensive as well as offensive by nature.

### **(B) Optional *abhicāra* rites in the sacrificial performances**

There are many blackmagical rites which are purely optional. These are to be performed only if the performer desires to cause harm to the enemy. Such rituals can be additional to the normal ones or can be simply modifications in the normal performances of the usual rituals. The ritual texts usually introduce these optional ones with the expressions like, 'If he wants to practise sorcery', or 'If he is practising sorcery', or 'If he has a rival' or 'In case he hates someone', or 'if the performer wants to bring such and such harm on the enemy', and so on.

By making changes in the utterances of the formulas and also making slight changes in the way of offerings, the performers bring blackmagical effects to their enemies in the following rituals. Thus in the fire building rite when the ceremony of placing the fire in the pan is to be performed there is an offering to Savitr with the utterances of eight formulas (cf. TS.4.1.1.a-h). The usual order is to utter these eight formulas continuously and at the end of the formulas the libation is to be made only once. If the priest desires of a man (the sacrificer) 'may he become worse', then after uttering each formula he has to offer a libation (TS.5.1.1.1-2; MS.3.1.1; ĀpŚS.16.1.5; HŚS.11.1.8). According to KS.18.19 and KapS.29.7 this way of offering is to



be followed if the priest wants the sacrificer to be neither worse nor better. At the end of an animal sacrifice the priest should make offering of libations in a 'discontinued manner' in case he hates the sacrificer (MS.4.8.4; KS.29.3; ĀpŚS.13.8.4). At the time of making fire in the pan there is an offering rite of six oblations called *āhītayajus* to Agni with the utterance of six short formulas mentioned in MS.2.7.7 (cf. TS.4.1.9.1). If the priest wants to make the sacrificer deaf then he is instructed to offer the oblation only once after uttering all the formulas (MS.3.1.9; cf. ĀpŚS.16.8.14).

For the purpose of blackmagic the performers in some other cases have to do certain manual activities accompanied by the utterances of certain formulas both of which do not form a part of the original ritual. For example, after drawing the *upāṁśu* cup in a Soma-sacrifice if the priest wants to practise abhicāra he is instructed to put down the cup on the mound (*khara*) uttering the formula- 'I place you on the life breath of N.N.' (TS.6.4.5.6-7; MS.4.5.5; KS.27.1; KapS.47.1; ŚB.4.1.1.17; KŚS.9.4.30; ĀpŚS.12.11.7; HŚS.8.3.8; BhŚS.13.11.12). Usually the *upāṁśu* cup, unlike the other cups, is not to be put down on the mound but it is offered immediately just after its drawing. Again if the priest wants to practise abhicāra he is instructed to cover up the mouth of the cup with his hand and utter "here I cover up the breath of N. N. of such and such lineage", just before putting it down on the mound (MS.4.5.5; ĀpŚS.12.11.7; KŚS.9.4.32). Similarly after drawing the *antaryāma* cup which is usually not to be put down, if the priest wants to practise abhicāra then he should put it down with the formula 'I put it down on the in-breath of N.N.' (ŚB.4.1.2.17; KŚS.9.4.31; BhŚS.13.13.9). It is mentioned in MS.4.6.6 that if the priest desires to practise abhicāra, after drawing the *dhruva* cup he should stir somajuce in the cup with the formula "thus I turn the life time of N.N., of the lineage such and such" (ĀpŚS.12.16.7-8). In an animal sacrifice after the victim is killed the priest



has to loosen its noose. If he wants to practise abhicāra then after loosening the noose he is instructed to put the noose on any log or stake and utter "he who hates us may he fall down, we loosen the noose at him" (KS.30.9; ĀpŚS.7.17.7; HŚS.4.4.12; MŚS.1.8.3.37). In this context there is another formula prescribed in BhŚS.7.13.8 and occurring in TS.3.1.4.4—"I cast down the enemy, I fasten the noose on him whom we hate".

The performers of some other abhicāra rites are instructed to do some physical movements while uttering some formulas. These rites do not form a part of normal performances but are purely optional depending on the desire of the performers. For instance, when the fifteen kindling verses are being recited in the N. and FM. sacrifices by the priest there is an instruction for the sacrificer to do some physical movements in order to practise abhicāra. If one hates anybody then at the time of recitation of each kindling verse one should act as if he were crushing one's foe with one's toes and utter "I here crush so and so". In this case one has to press down earth by his great toes (ŚB.1.3.5.7; KŚS.3.1.7). After paying reverence to the Sun in the same sacrifices if one wants to practise abhicāra then one should press one's right heel on the ground and utter "Here I suppress the life breath of N.N., of the lineage of such and such", (MS.1.4.3; ĀpŚS.4.15.3). Similarly after having taken four Viṣṇu strides in the concluding part of the N. and FM. sacrifices, if the sacrificer wants to practise abhicāra, he is instructed to move round, putting pressure on the ground by the ankle of his right foot and utter "Here do I entangle the breath of N. N., the son of N. N. with heat" (BhŚS.4.21.3). Most of these physical actions which appear to be symbolical aim at suppressing the life breath of the enemy. This can be understood from the utterances accompanying with such actions. During the performances of a Soma sacrifice at the time of offering the *upāṁśu* cup, if the priest wants to practise



abhicāra against an enemy who stays far away from him then he should utter a formula just before offering the cup of juice, "slay N.N., then will I sacrifice to you", and immediately stands there for some time restraining his breath as long as he can until he becomes weary (TS.6.4.5.6; ĀpŚS.12.11.8; BhŚS.13.11.16-17). It is a blackmagical attempt to kill the enemy by suffocating him.

Sometimes there are variations in the movements according to the status of the enemy<sup>6</sup> while the formula in such cases may be either changed or remain unchanged. Thus during the performance of *agnihotra*, if the sacrificer, after paying reverence to the *āhavanīya* fire desires to practise abhicāra, he is instructed to do some physical movements accompanied by utterance of some formulas. If his rival is worse than he, then he is told to press the ground by his right heel and utter, "thou art the suppressor; I suppress him who hates us and whom we hate". If the rival is equal to him then he should press the ground with his right foot and utter, "thou art the master, do I have mastery over him who hates us and whom we hate", and if the rival is better than he then he should press the ground with the fore-part of his right foot with the formula, "thou art the subduer, may I subdue him who hates us and whom we hate", (MS.1.5.11; KS.7.9; ĀpŚS.6.18.2)14. Similarly in a Soma sacrifice just before offering the *aindravāyavya* cup there is an instruction for the sacrificer, if he wants to practise abhicāra, to press one of his thumbs by means of one of his fore-fingers and utter- "O Indra Vāyu, the enemy who is hostile to us, who seeks to assail us, O Lord of splendor, may I here hurt him below my feet, so that O Indra, I may shine as the highest" (TS.3.2.10.2). This he has to do if the foe is stronger than he. But in case the foe is weaker than he, he has to press one of his fore fingers by means of one of his thumbs and utter the same formula (ĀpŚS.12.20.25-12.21.1). According to the BhŚS.13.12.2 the instruction is little changed – if the foe is an elder cousin (*bhrātṛvya*) of the sacrificer then he should do



according to the first instruction mentioned above and if the foe happens to be the younger cousin of him then he has to follow the second instruction. The same rite is also found in MS.4.5.8 in the context of the offering of the *maitrāvaruṇa* cup and the formula which is prescribed contains the name of Mitra and Varuṇa in the place of Indra and Vāyu in the previous formula.

Certain optional abhicāra rites are prescribed to be performed aiming at a particular direction in which the enemy is supposed to be present and these rites are accompanied by the utterance of certain formulas. At the time of preparing the ground for building the fire altar in the *cayana* sacrifice the ground is to be ploughed and the priest has to collect the clods which are scattered to different sides out of the ploughing ground. While collecting them the priest is instructed to collect a clod from that direction in which he thinks that the enemy whom the sacrificer hates is present and utter "food and strength do I take hence". By doing this he is supposed to win the food and strength from that direction and the foe who stays in that direction is expected to become hungry (TS.5.2.5.6; MS.3.2.5; KS.20.4; ĀpŚS.16.20.6; HŚS.11.6.53). This rite is also mentioned in MŚS.6.1.6.4 with a little change. According to this text the priest should take the clods from that side where the persons whom he wants to make hungry are thought to be present. One notices another variation of this rite in the BŚS.10.26, that is, the priest should take two clods from outside the ploughing ground while uttering the same formula. Then he has to throw one clod inside the ploughing field and the other one he has to throw towards that direction where he thinks the enemy is present. In the *pravargya* ceremony while performing the rite of banishment of the *pravargya*-utensils at the end of the ceremony, the priest should throw the *udumbara* branch which is used for the banishment of the utensils towards that side where he thinks that the foe (of the sacrificer) is present and while throwing he has to utter-



"here I burn by means of the heat the life breath of N.N., of the lineage of such and such" (TĀ.5.10.5-6; BhŚS.11.16.5-6; HŚS.24.6.14).

In case of some other similar abhicāra rites one finds some other peculiarities. For example, in a Soma sacrifice while offering the Soma juice from the *upāṁśu* cup in the fire if the priest desires to practise blackmagic should also offer the sprays of Soma-juice which adhere to his limbs or to his garments while pressing the Soma-plant after the offering of the *upāṁśu* cup. At the time of offering the sprays he utters "O divine plant, let that be true, where for I pray you, let N.N. be struck down by destruction falling from above, crash (*phat.*)" (VS.7.3; ŚB.4.1.1.26; KŚS.9.4.39; ĀpŚS.12.11.10). The remarkable point in this rite is that the drops of Soma-juice which adhere to the limbs or garments of the priest are nothing but the remnants or unused parts of the sacrificial materials which are supposed to have some dangerous power and this dangerous power is diverted towards the enemy through the above offering. The use of meaningless (or rather onomatopoeic) syllable '*phat.*' is also noteworthy which usually is not uttered in the course of normal ritual. When the sacrificer eats his portion of *dadhigharma*, he is instructed to look at his foe and utter – "O Agni, the form of your which is hostile..." (HŚS.24.2.22). Here the action of looking at someone or something is considered to be equal to touching and this is a means of contagious magic<sup>7</sup>. In the fire building rite the priest has to moisten the place around the fire by circumambulating and sprinkling water on it for three times. Then he has to go round the fires for three times without sprinkling water and utter – "In the stone is thy hunger, let thy pain reach N.N. whom we hate" (TS.4.6.1.1; MS.2.10.1). This is an obligatory rite and it is to be performed whether or not any abhicāra is intended. But if the priest wants to practise abhicāra then he has to go around the fire for more three times uttering the same formula (MS.38.3.5; KS.21.7). In the formula which is uttered



here the desire to bring harm to the enemy is clearly expressed.

By introducing some changes in the normal way of making libations the priests can practise blackmagic against the sacrificer. Thus when the priest offers *āghāra* libations in the N. and FM. sacrifices, if he wants to make the sacrificer perish he should offer the libation crookedly instead of straightly. This crooked way of libation-offering is said to lead the breath of the sacrificer to blow crookedly so that he will perish quickly (TS.2.5.11.7; MS.4.1.14; ĀpŚS.2.14.2; HŚS.2.1.2). In the fire building rite an offering called *vasordhārā* is to be offered. In this context if the priest who offers the libation wants to separate the breath and eating of food from the sacrificer then instead of a continuous flow he is instructed to offer the libation in a discontinued manner. In other words the priest here, while offerings should break the flow of offering in the middle (TS.5.8.4.1-2; ĀpŚS.17.17.9; HŚS.12.6.2). In MS.3.4.1 and KS.21.11 it is mentioned that if the priest hates the sacrificer he should do so and as the result of this rite, the breath and eating of food will be separated from the sacrificer. In these two examples one finds that the priest changes the manner of offering in order to practise blackmagic against the sacrificer. There is another way of changing the manner of offerings which leads the sacrificer to become worse or he is not allowed to be better. The priest in the N. and FM. sacrifices offers the second *āghāra* offering (out of two *āghāras*) in a standing position. If he wants to make the sacrificer worse then he should offer the libation stepping backward from the *āhavanīya* fire. Again, if he wants that the sacrificer should be neither worse nor better then he should offer standing in one place constantly. But on the other hand if he wants to make him better he should step forward while offering (MS.1.4.12). Here there are three choices before the priest, out of which if he follows the first



and second then he changes the normal manner of offering with an intention to make him worse or not to allow him be become better. The normal manner here is the third one as it is expected from every priest to act and think for their patron sacrificer's betterment on behalf of who they are performing sacrifices. But it is also left to their choice to make better or worse of the sacrificer during their performances of such completed rituals inside the sacrifices. In a similar example, one finds that while offering five *prayāja* offerings if the priest wants to make the sacrificer worse then he is told to offer these offerings stepping backward, if he wants him to be neither better nor worse then he should stand in one place and with an intention to make him better he steps forward while offering (ĀpŚS.2.17.5; HŚS.2.2.5). Some times the prescription is to change the order of offering the libations in order to practise blackmagic against the sacrificer. After the establishment of fires the rite of offering three libations to Agni-*pavamāna*, Agni-*pāvaka* and Agni-*śuci* are to be made. While offering these libations if the priest wants to make the sacrificer worse then he should offer each of these offerings separately according to MS.1.6.8 and ĀpŚS.5.21.7. If he wants that the position of the sacrificer should not change, i.e. neither better nor worse, then he is advised to offer these three offerings at one time and on the other hand if he wants him to be better, then he is instructed to separate the offering to Agni *pavamāna* from the other two offerings (ĀpŚS.5.21.7). Still in another offering rite the priest is told to change the quantity of the oblations for the sake of practicing blackmagic. During the performance of *agnihotra* rite there is an offering called *samidhoma* consisting of two libations called *pūrvāhutiḥ* and *uttarāhutiḥ*. In normal cases the priest offers a lesser quantity of the oblation material in the *pūrvāhutiḥ* than in the *uttarāhutiḥ*. But in case the priest wants to make the sacrificer worse then he has to offer a greater



quantity of libation in the *pūrvāhuti* and a lesser quantity in the *uttarāhuti* (TB.2.1.4.2; ĀpŚS.6.11.3l; HŚS.3.7.18).

There is a provision to add some additional actions to the normal ones if the performers want to practise abhicāra. For example, the priest girdles the post in an animal sacrifice with a girdle. While doing the same if he desires that the sacrificer should have a reduced brilliance and there should not be rain in his kingdom then after girdling the post with the girdle he should attract the two endings of the rope downwards (MS.3.4.9; KS.26.6; KapS.41.4). This action of attracting the ends of the girdle is an additional action to be performed if blackmagic is intended by the priest against the sacrificer. In the animal sacrifice of eleven victims the priest girdles the midmost past (*agniṣṭha*) with two ropes. If he desires that a girl should be born to the sacrificer (instead of a son who is normally desired) then after girdling the post he should intertwine the girdles near their ends (TS.6.6.4.3; BŚS.17.13; ĀpŚs.7.11.8; HŚS.4.2.8). After drawing the *upāṁśu* cup if the priest desires that there should be no rain (in the region of the sacrificer) then before offering the cup he should rub the cup with his hand upwards (TS.6.4.5.6; ĀpŚS.12.11.4). Thereby he is supposed to keep the rain away from the region of the sacrificer. In the firebuilding rite when the priest takes fire from the *gārhapatya* to *āhavanīya* fire place (*agnipraṇayana*) another priest makes a chariot wheel revolve round for three times in a direction from the *gārhapatya* fire towards the *āhavanīya* fire. In case the sacrificer has a rival, the priest should revolve round the wheel additionally for three more times (total six times) (MS.1.6.6; BhŚS.5.8.5). In this context ĀpŚS.5.14.6 and HŚS.3.4.10 mention that if the priest hates the sacrificer then only he should do the same. While sprinkling water on various sacrificial materials during the performances of the N. and FM. sacrifices the priest should sprinkle on the fire also if he hates the sacrificer (ĀpŚS.1.19.2). Otherwise, in the usual performance the sprinkling on the fire is not to be done.



In the following optional sorcery rites also one notices some changes introduced in the normal procedures with a hope to harm the rival. Thus after offering the *upāṁśu* and *antaryāma* cups in a Soma-sacrifice the priest should put down these cups keeping a close contact with the *upāṁśu savana* (name of a pressing stone). If the priest desires that the sacrificer should die, then he is told to put the cups down without any contact with the stone. These two cups and the stone are said to be identical with expiration, inspiration and cross-breathing respectively. By putting the cup in a changed manner the priest is supposed to sever the expiration and inspiration of the sacrificer from his cross-breathing (TS.6.4.6.4; ĀpŚS.12.13.10; HŚS.8.4.9). The priest has to anoint the *agniṣṭha* corner of the sacrificial post (out of the eight corners of the post one which faces the *āhavanīya* fire is called *agniṣṭha*). He should anoint it from top to bottom without keeping any gap. But if the priest hates the sacrificer then he should leave some portion of the corner of that post unanointed and by doing this he is said to make the sacrificer deprive of brilliance (KS.26.5). In an animal sacrifice of eleven victims there are eleven posts to be set up. The usual manner of setting these posts is that the *agniṣṭha* post is to be set in front of *āhavanīya* fire, towards its north and south other ten posts are to be set, five on each side in such a manner that the northern five posts should be lower than the southern five posts. But if the priest desires the death of the sacrificer then he is instructed to set up these posts in a 'grave' fashion (*gartamītam*) in which he makes the northern five posts higher than the southern five posts. Thereby he is supposed to bring death to the sacrificer very soon (TS.6.6.4.2; BŚS.17.13; ĀpŚS.14.6.7; HŚS.9.8.22). In KS.29.8, there is a further prescription that if the priest wants to make the sacrificer worse then he should set these posts all in the same level. Again, if the sacrificer has rivals then the post should be set



without any definite principle of their order according to ĀpŚS.14.6.6 and HŚS.9.8.22. In case the sacrificer wants to practise abhicāra the priest should set up the posts in such a manner that they look like the top of an axle (*ārāgra*). In that case the midmost post be the highest and the other posts of its two sides become gradually lower up to the end where the last posts in the both sides become lowest (ĀpŚS.14.6.3; HŚS.9.8.22; MŚS.5.2.12.14). To these eleven posts eleven victims are tied and they are meant for different deities. The deities to whom the victims are tied to the posts in an usual order are (starting from the northern side to the southern), *Sarasvatī*, *Pūṣan*, *Viśvedevāḥ*, *Maruts*, *Savitṛ*, *Agni*, *Soma*, *Bṛhaspati*, *Indra*, *Indra* and *Agni*, *Varuṇa*<sup>9</sup> (cf. BŚS.17. 13-14). According to TS.6.6.5.4, if the priest desires that the people of the sacrificer (king) may fall in to confusion then he should, while tying the victims to different posts, interchange the animals. Thus in this rite the priest needs only to change the order of tying up the victims in order to practise blackmagic against the sacrificer.

By making little change in the place of their ritual activities the performers of some optional abhicāra rites desire to bring harms on their enemies. Following are some of such rituals mentioned in the ritual texts. For drawing the *ukthya* cup in a Soma sacrifice the proper place is in between the *sadas* pendal and the pendal for the oblation holder (*hāvirdhāna maṇḍapa*). If the priest who draws the cup wants to bestow the glory of the sacrifice upon himself (instead of on the sacrificer), then he should draw the cup standing in between the *āhavanīya* fire place and the pendal for the oblation holder (TS.6.5.1.4-5; MS.4.6.5; KS.27.10; ĀpŚS.12.29.1; HŚS.8.8.24). If the priest wants to bestow the glory on the *sadasyas* he should draw it grasping (entering) the *sadas* pendal (TS.6.5.1.5; KS.27.10; ĀpŚS.12.29.1; HŚS.8.8.24). Thus the priest by changing the place for drawing the *ukthya* cup can make the sacrificer deprive of the glory of his sacrifice.



In the morning pressing of a Soma sacrifice the priest anoints (mixes) the *vasatīvarī* water with the butter from the ladle called *pracaraṇī* and places the ladle on the tip of the pole of the southern oblation holder (cart). If he wants to make the sacrificer impotent then he is instructed to put it down below the cart instead of on the tip of its pole (HŚS.8.1.4). After drawing the cups for dual divinities (*dvidevatya*) when the priest puts them down in their respective places he should interchange the places of putting down these cups, if he desires to make the sacrificer worse (KS.27.5; KapS.42.5).

Bringing changes in the sequence of some rites can help the performers to practise some of the optional Śrauta abhicāra rites. Thus while piling the second layer of the fire-building the priest has to put two types of bricks called *vayasyā* (strengthening) nineteen in number and five bricks called *apasyā* (water-bricks). While putting these two types of bricks in their respective places, if the priest wants to make the sacrificer deprive of cattle then he is told to put down the *vayasyā* bricks first and afterwards the *apasyā* bricks. On the other hand if he wants to make the sacrificer rich in cattle he should put down the *apasyā* bricks first and afterwards the *vayasyā* bricks (TS.5.3.1.4; KS.20.10; KapS.13.12; ĀpŚS.17.1.9). In the same fire-building rite during the performance of the rite of bringing soil for the fire-pan, the priest has to take the halter of the horse first and fix it on the horse. Then he takes the halters of the two asses and fixes the same on the asses. In this context it is mentioned in MS.3.1.3 and ĀpŚS.16.2.4 that if the priests want to make the sacrificer worse then they should first take the asses with their halters and afterwards the horses. Thus here the sequence of rites plays significant role in bringing harmful effects.

While performing some other manual rites the performers have to maintain a fixed height or level. But in case the practise of blackmagic is desired they have to change the normal height or level while doing these actions. Thus at the time of girdling the sacrificial post in an animal sacrifice



the priest should girdle the post at the height which is equal to the height of the navel of the sacrificer while he stands on the ground. In case the priest desires to make the sacrificer deprive of his strength then he should girdle the post at the level either higher or lower (TS.6.3.4.5; KS.26.6; ĀpŚS.7.11.6). Again, if he desires that the rain should not fall (on the kingdom of the sacrificer-king) he should girdle at a lower level (TS.6.3.4.6; ĀpŚS.7.11.6; see however, KS.26.6 which prescribes exactly the reverse). Similarly while offering the second *āghāra* offering in a standing position during the N. and FM. sacrifices the priest usually upholds the ladle at the level of his navel. But if he hates the sacrificer, it is prescribed that he should hold the ladle below his navel while offering (MS.1.4.12; ĀpŚS.2.14.6; HŚS.2.1.2).

In order to cause blackmagical effects some rites are prescribed to be performed diagonally. While constructing the *sadas* pendal in a Soma-sacrifice if the priest hates the sacrificer then he should construct it diagonally according to MS.3.8.9. Thereby he is said to make the breath of the sacrificer confused, so that he may die. In the consecration ceremony when the priest purifies the sacrificer with the help of blades of *darbha* grass, if the priest hates the sacrificer, he should purify him diagonally (MS.3.6.3; ĀpŚS.10.7.9). While setting up ten *vāḷakhilya* bricks at the third layer of the fire altar, if the priest hates the sacrificer he is instructed to put these bricks diagonally and thereby he is supposed to bring confusion to the breath of the sacrificer (MS.3.2.9).

During the performance of some blackmagical rites the performers change the direction of their performances in order to cause harm. In the fire-building rite (*cayana*) the priest has to put heads of animals along with a head of a man on the pan (the heads are made of clay). Normally he should put the heads of animals facing towards the head of man. But if he desires to make sacrificer deprive of cattle he should put the heads of animals in such a way that they look away from the head of man (TS.5.2.9.3-4; MS.3.2.7; KS.20.8;



KapS.31.10; ĀpŚS.16.27.8; HŚS.11.7.58). Similarly when the priest sets up the sacrificial post in an animal sacrifice the priest usually takes care of making the *agniṣṭha* corner of the post face towards the *āhavanīya* fire. But in case he desires to make the sacrificer deprive of brilliance, deities and power he should move the *agniṣṭha* corner away from the fire (TS.6.3.4.4; TS.26.5; KapS.41.3).

If the practise of blackmagic is desired some sacrificial objects are to be put with their sides opposite to those in the normal performances. A brick called *aśāḍhā* is to be put in the first layer of the fire altar at the time of its building. There is a mark of three lines on its one side made at the time of its preparation. While putting down it the priest normally makes the side of the brick having lines upwards. If the priest wants the sacrificer to be worse then he is instructed to put the brick with its side having lines downward (TS.5.2.8.4; KS.20.6-7; KapS.31.8). Similarly at the time of purchasing Soma-plants from the Soma-seller in a Soma-sacrifice the priest spreads the skin of an animal on the ground on which the Soma-plants are to be measured. Normally he should spread the skin with its hairy side upwards. But if he desires to make the sacrificer without cattle then he is advised to spread the skin with its rough side upwards (i.e. the side without hair should be upward) (TS.6.1.9.2; ĀpŚS.10.24.6).

In certain cases the instructions are to make use of some objects or materials which are considered to be inferior in quality if the performer intends to practise abhicāra or blackmagic. Thus for example, while cutting a tree for the preparation of the sacrificial post in an animal sacrifice, if the priest desires that the sacrificer should become without support then he should cut a 'branch' for him instead of a 'tree'. A branch is considered to be supportless (as it is not fixed on the ground unlike any tree). Therefore it is thought that this will lead the sacrificer to become supportless (TS.6.3.3.4; KS.26.3;



KapS.41.1; ĀpŚS.7.1.18; BhŚS.7.1.9; HŚS.4.1.1). Again if the priest desires to make the sacrificer without cattle then he should cut a tree which is dry at its top (TS.6.3.3.4; KS.26.3; KapS.41.1; BhŚS.7.1.9). Such trees are considered to be devoid of cattle and that is why it is supposed to make the sacrificer without cattle. Similarly when the priest leads the victim towards the deity (*pasūpākaraṇa*) in an animal sacrifice with the help of a branch it is said in KS.26.7 and KapS.41.5 that if the priest hates the sacrificer he should lead the victim by means of a branch which is dry and without leaves by which he is supposed to make the sacrificer without cattle (ĀpŚS.7.12.6). In these rites the defective branches or trees are to be used with the belief that these are blackmagically significant. In the animal sacrifice when *vasāhoma* (oblation of fat of the victim) is offered at the time of *avāntareḍā*, the priest should place a piece of flesh of the animal without fat, if he desires to make the sacrificer devoid of cattle (TS.6.3.11.5; ĀpŚS.7.26.4; HŚS.4.5.16). In the normal course, there should be fat in that piece of flesh. Here it is believed that something defective is harmful blackmagically.

Change in the materials originally prescribed for the normal performances can prove to be blackmagically significant in some other cases also as found in the ritual texts. For example, the priest who wants to create a rival to the sacrificer, while preparing a wooden piece (*caṣāla*) for the sacrificial post is instructed by KS.26.4 to prepare the *caṣāla* out of any other tree (wood) instead of making it from the same wood of which the post is made. In this context it is mentioned in ĀpŚS.7.3.5 and HŚS.4.1.2 that if the priest wants any other person to have mastery over the kingdom of the sacrificer then he should make the *caṣāla* as well as *svaru* (the first splinter of the wood at the time of cutting the tree for the post) out of the tree different from the one used for the sacrificial post. Normally the first splinter of the tree to be used for the sacrificial post is called *svaru* and the *caṣāla* is also to be made out of the same tree of which the post is



made. In the fire-building rite, in order to make fire in the pan, the normal practise is to put the pan on the *āhavanīya* fire and heat it up till the fire is produced in the pan itself and then with the help of dry blades of grass one has to catch the fire in the pan. But the priest is instructed to bring the fire from elsewhere and put in the pan if he desires to create a foe to the sacrificer (TS.5.1.9.4; KS.19.10; KapS.30.8; MS.3.1.9; BhŚS.10.13; HŚS.11.3.8). The fire automatically produced in the pan out of excessive heat is supposed to be originated from the *āhavanīya* fire itself, but the fire which is brought from anywhere else is considered to be stranger to the *āhavanīya* fire and therefore, it is thought to be able to create foe to the sacrificer.

Decrease in the quantity of sacrificial materials can be a means to cause harmful effects magically at the time of sacrificial performances<sup>10</sup> and the performers of some optional blackmagical practices make use of this means to meet their ends. At the time of preparation of the ground of the fire altar the priest has to put down a panful of sands. If he wants to make the sacrificer hungry then he is instructed to put down the pan which is 'deficient'. In other words he should not fill up the pan with sands completely,<sup>11</sup> which is usually done in the normal practices (TS.5.2.9.1; ĀpŚS.16.26.10; HŚS.11.7.50). At the time of drawing the *dhruva* cup in a Somasacrifice it is mentioned that if the priest wants to shorten the life time of the sacrificer, he should draw this cup decreasing the quantity of juice instead of drawing it fully (KS.28.1; ĀpŚS.12.16.2; HŚS.8.4.11).

It is also noticed in some other cases that the performers are instructed to drop some normal ritual activities in order to bring harm to their enemies magically. When the ground is to be prepared for the building of fire altar the priest has to scatter sands on the ground. Before scattering sands he should pile some gravels (*śarkarā*). If the priest desires that the sacrificer



should have no cattle then he should scatter without piling the gravels (TS.5.2.6.3; KS.20.4; KapS.31.6; ĀpŚS.16.20.11; HŚS.11.2.62). In context of the girdling the sacrificial post with a rope in an animal sacrifice if the priest hates the sacrificer he should drop the action of girdling the post according to the texts (KS.26.6 and KapS.41.4). After offering five *prayāja* offerings in the N. and FM. sacrifices the priest should sprinkle the remnants of ghee on the oblations kept on the altar. But if he hates the sacrificer he is told not to sprinkle the same (ĀpŚS.2.17.7).

There are also found some *pratyabhicāra* or counter blackmagical rites to be performed by those who know that others are performing blackmagic against them. Thereby they make the practiced abhicāra rites of others not only ineffective but also cause the evil powers of these rites to revert towards their practisers like a boomerang. For example, during the performance of the *Rājasūya* sacrifice there is an offering to be made with *apāmārga* grains (cf. ŚB.5.2.4.14; TB.1.7.1.8). This rite is to be performed outside the sacrificial place. After offering this when the priest and others return back to the sacrificial ground another offering rite with *apāmārga* is to be performed if the sacrificer wants to practise the counter abhicāra against his enemy. By means of this offering he is supposed to revert the blackmagic towards the enemy and cause harm to him. While offering the same the priest is instructed to look back towards that direction in which the practiser of blackmagic is thought to be present. The *apāmārga* plant<sup>12</sup> is said to have the backward effect on account of which it is thought to be able to make the blackmagic performed by the enemy return back (ŚB.5.2.4.20). In the course of discussion about the sequence of the *grahas* in a twelve day Soma sacrifice, it is mentioned in TS.7.2.7.4 that he, against whom abhicāra has been practised, should draw the *ukthya graha* first. The *ukthya graha* is considered to be the power of all *grahas* and



the performer with the help of this *graha* should yoke him with all power (cf. KS.30.3). In a Soma-sacrifice, usually the *aindravāyavya graha* is drawn first (not counting the *upāṁśugraha* which is of a special type) and the drawing of the *ukthyā graha* occurs sixth in the serial. But here, for the purpose of counter abhicāra this *graha* is to be drawn at first intentionally.

### (C) Special blackmagical *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices of optional type

The desire to practise abhicāra through the Vedic sacrificial performances takes a more concrete shape in the performance of special blackmagical sacrifices. These optional sacrifices are to be performed specifically for the sake of destroying one's enemy. These are of three types, (i) *iṣṭis* (*kāmyāḥ iṣṭayaḥ*) of which the basic paradigm is the N. and FM. sacrifices, (ii) animal sacrifices (*kāmyāḥ paśavaḥ*) of which the offering of animal to Agni and Soma in a Soma-sacrifice is the basic paradigm and (iii) the blackmagical Soma sacrifices of which the *Agniṣṭoma* is the basic paradigm. In this section there will be discussions on some blackmagical *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices.

In the Vedic texts some of these sacrifices are prescribed for a sacrificer who is characterized as "one who is practising sorcery (*abhicāran*)". Thus it is said in TS.2.4.11.2 that he who wants to practise sorcery should sacrifice with *tridhātavyeṣṭi* (an *iṣṭi* with the three constituents). The text further mentions that which has three constituents is the 'whole of sacrifice', and with the whole of sacrifice the sacrificer practises abhicāra against his foe and lays him low. The same sacrifice is also mentioned in MS.2.4.5; KS.12.3; ŚB.5.5.5.14; ĀpŚS.19.27.15-21; HŚS.22.6.24-27; BŚS.13.41-42; KŚS.15.7.35 and MŚS.5.2.5.1-18. In this *iṣṭi* one has to offer a cake on twelve potsherds to Indra Viṣṇu or three cakes on four potsherds each to the same deities. The sacrificial gift for this sacrifice is one hundred cows if any other result is desired



but in order to practise abhicāra, it is prescribed in MŚS.5.2.5.10 to give an extra gift of three cows, three pieces of gold and three *tārpya* garments. But in ŚB.5.5.5.16 it is prescribed that one has to give the Brahman priest three gold pieces each of hundred *mānas*, to the Hotṛ priest he gives three milk-cows and to the Adhvaryu priest three garments are to be given. To the priest called Agnidh a bullock should be given. In MS.2.4.3 and ŚB.5.5.5.6 one reads how Indra could defeat Vṛtra with the help of these constituents viz. *ṛk*, *sāman* and *yajus*.

A person who wants to practise abhicāra should offer cooked food to Soma and Rudra (TS.2.2.10.4 and BŚS.13.18). By this sacrifice the sacrificer is supposed to ransom his foe from his deity Soma. Because Soma is considered as the deity of all men. With the help of this offering he entrusts his foe to Rudra because Rudra is Agni (cf. TS.2.2.10.4). As a result the foe is supposed to attain ruin immediately (TS.2.2.10.4). There are some more details found in the texts like MS.2.1.6; KS.11.5; MŚS.5.1.6.12-14 regarding this sacrifice. These texts prescribe that the cooked food is to be prepared out of black rice. The reeds should be used as sacrificial grasses and the kindling sticks are to be prepared out of the *vibhūtaka* wood.

Another *iṣṭi* for the practise of abhicāra is found in TS.2.2.9.1, in which the sacrificer offers a cake on eleven potsherds to Agni and Viṣṇu, a portion of ghee to Sarasvatī and cooked rice to Bṛhaspati. These four deities are said to be identical with All-gods, sacrifice, speech and Brahman respectively and the sacrificer is said to practise against his enemy with the help of these All-gods etc. One finds this *iṣṭi* also in MS.2.1.7; KS.10.1; BŚS.13.15; ĀpŚS.19.19.6; HŚS.22.3.4-5 and MŚS.5.1.6.23-26.

In another *iṣṭi* the sacrificer has to offer a cake on eight potsherds to Agni, *Rudravat* if he wants to practise abhicāra. As Rudra is considered as a dangerous form of Agni, he (Rudra) is supposed to cut the enemy down for the sacrificer (TS.2.2.2.3). One finds some other peculiarities of this sacrifice



as following. In this *iṣṭi* the cake is to be prepared out of black rice. Black is the colour of death, and by this offering the sacrificer is supposed to let the foe die (KS.10.6). According to BŚS.23.1, the priests during the performance of this *iṣṭi* should move about putting on red turbans and wearing red garments. And according to HŚS.22.2.11, the priests should suspend their sacred threads over their right shoulder and under their left arm. The *sara* grass serves the purpose of *barhis* and the faggots are prepared out of the *vibhītaka* wood.

In MS.2.1.9 and MŚS.5.1.7.17-18, another *iṣṭi* is prescribed to be performed by a sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra in which one has to offer a cake on eleven potsherds to Indra and another cake on eleven potsherds to Maruts. It is further instructed in these texts that while offering to Indra the portions should be cut out from the upper part of the cake and for Maruts from the lower part.

For one who wants to perform sorcery against his enemy should offer a cake on twenty potsherds to Maruts (MS.2.1.9 and MŚS.5.1.7.24-26). In this *iṣṭi* a special instruction is given that after the cake has been prepared it should be put on the altar and by means of the wooden sword it should be cut in to two pieces with the utterance of the formula – “thus I cut off the head of N.N.; of the lineage of such and such by the help of Indra’s thunderbolt”. Then one has to pray at the wooden sword uttering another formula mentioned in MS.2.1.9, “here they stroke the tiger... etc.” (cf. MŚS.5.1.7.25-26).

Still another *iṣṭi* is found in KS.10.4 which is meant for the practise of abhicāra. One has to offer in this *iṣṭi* the cooked rice of barley grains to Varuṇa and a cake on twelve potsherds to Agni-Vaiśvānara.

In addition to these *iṣṭis* there are some optional animal sacrifices meant for the practise of abhicāra. For example, it is prescribed in TS.2.1.8.2 that desiring to practise



abhicāra a sacrificer should perform an animal sacrifice in which he has to offer a barren cow with brown ears to Brahmanaspati. Before the main offering, a cake on ten potsherds should be offered to Varuṇa. On account of this offering to Varuṇa the sacrificer causes his foe to be seized by Varuṇa and by the offering to Brahmanaspati he is supposed to lay the foe low. The sacrificial post in this sacrifice is to be shaped like the wooden sword which is identical with thunder bolt and by means of which the sacrificer is said to hurl the bolt at his foe. Some *sara* grasses are to be spread on the *Vedī* in order to crush the foe and faggots are to be prepared out of *vibhītaka* wood so that they will lead to split up the foe. According to MS.2.5.7 and KS.13.8, the barren cow should be of brown colour instead of having brown ears as prescribed in TS.2.1.8.2.

A red barren cow is to be offered to Rudra for the practise of abhicāra and all other details like its post, grass and faggots are similar to those mentioned in the above paragraph (TS.2.1.7.7).

In another optional animal sacrifice the sacrificer is advised to offer a hornless goat (*tupara*) to Brahmanaspati. In this the sacrificial post, faggots and sacrificial grasses are the same as before. This sacrifice is mentioned in TS.2.1.5.7; BŚS.20.25; ĀpŚS.19.16.12 and HŚS.22.1.19. In BŚS.20.25 it is further mentioned that the post should have the *caṣāla* (a wooden cap on the top of the post) shaped like wooden sword but according to BŚS.24.34 the wooden sword itself should be used as the post and in that case the post should not have any *caṣāla* to be fixed on it. According to MS.2.5.9 and MŚS.5.2.10.42 the victim should be slightly different. They prescribe that a ruddy hornless goat born of a she-goat of variegated colours should be killed (cf. in general KS.13.4).

In another animal sacrifice of abhicāra type one should offer a black ram to Varuṇa (MS.2.5.6 and MŚS.5.2.10.29-31). The black colour symbolizes death and it is hoped that the enemy will die on account of this offering.

There is a prescription in MS.2.5.11 according to which



three victims are to be offered to three deities by a sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra against his enemy. These animal victims are a goat for Vāyu, a bull for Indra and a ram for Varuṇa. By offering the first two animals for Vāyu and Indra the sacrificer is supposed to hurl a thunderbolt at his foe and by the third victim offered to Varuṇa he makes his enemy seized by Varuṇa.

The sacrificer king desiring to practise abhicāra should kill a red bull having its trunk grown up recently (*prathama kusindha*) for Indra the holder of thunderbolt (KS.13.3).

Some times the texts prescribe some optional *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices for a sacrificer who has enemy (*bhrātr̥vyavān*). Whether such a sacrificer is desirous of practising abhicāra against his rival or not, it is assumed that such a sacrificer requires the same and therefore the prescriptions are to provide him a chance to do so with the hope that his enemy or rival will be killed or harmed. For example, an *iṣṭi* is prescribed in TS.2.4.2.3 for a person who has foes and who is in conflict with them. He should offer a cake on eleven potsherds to Indra, 'the freer from tribulation' (*am̐homuc*), a similar cake to Indra, 'the driver away of foes' (*vaim̐ṛdha*), and another similar cake to Indra 'the powerful' (*indriyavat*) (KS.10.10; BŚS.13.35; HŚS.22.5.21). TS.2.4.2.3 explains the mystic meaning of these three oblations. Whose foe is superior to him he is considered to be seized by tribulation and by the first offering he becomes free from tribulation. To whom one of his equals is superior, even if he is not his foe, that person is considered as if beset by foes and the second oblation helps him in driving away his foes. Again he offers to Indra, the powerful, in order to bestow power in himself. Thus according to KS.10.10, a person who has many foes should perform this *iṣṭi*. This *iṣṭi* is called 'the victorious' (*vijitih*) (cf. TS.2.4.2.4 and KS.10.10),

One who has foes and is in conflict with them should perform another *iṣṭi* in which he should offer a cake on



eight potsherds to Agni, the forward (*pravat*), a similar cake to Agni-*vibādhavat*, 'the overcomer' and a third similar cake to Agni-*pratikavat*, 'with the face'. By the first offering he is supposed to repel his foes who are superior to him, with the second offering he repels the enemies equal to him and with the third offering he is supposed to repel the inferior foes (TS.2.4.1.3-4; KS.10.7; BŚS.13.35 and HŚS.2.25.20).

There is another *iṣṭi* called *saṁvargeṣṭi* meant for a sacrificer having conflicting foes and in this one has to offer a cake on eight potsherds to Agni, the gatherer (*saṁvarga*). After the cake is baked and placed on the altar the priest should touch the cake uttering a formula "thou art force, thou art strength... etc." (cf. TS.2.4.3.3). There by it is believed that the force, strength etc. of the foe will be appropriated by the sacrificer (TS.2.4.3.3; BŚS.13.35; ĀpŚS.19.25.9-13; HŚS.25.5.22). In MS.2.1.11 and KS.10.7 this *iṣṭi* is called *gāyatrīṣṭi* or *rāṣṭra saṁvargeṣṭi*. In this connection one finds the following story in MS.2.1.11, when the gods and Asuras were contending with each other the metre *gāyatrī* took away all their force, strength etc. and went away from them. Both of the parties tried to appropriate these force etc. from her but no one could succeed. At last the gods praised her with the formula "thou art force... etc." and could appropriate these from her (cf. TS.2.4.3.1-2; MS.2.1.11; KS.10.7). This offering is also found in ŚB.12.4.4.3 and JB.1.64-65 as an expiatory rite in connection with the *agnihotra*. There it is also mentioned that if one wishes to despoil one's rival one should perform this offering.

In MS.2.2.5 and MŚS.5.1.4.33-35 it is prescribed that a person who has foes should offer a cake on twelve potsherds to all gods and the priest, after the cake has been baked should split up it with the help of the wooden sword and while doing so he has to utter "here I split up..." (cf. MS.2.2.5). Before the offering to all gods an extra offering should be made to Viṣṇu the *urukrama*. For this offering, the oblations are the small particles of cake dropped on the sacrificial grass



and the particles which remain clinging to the wooden sword at the time of cutting the cake (MŚS.5.1.9.34).

The *indraturīyeṣṭi* is another sacrifice meant for the sacrificer having rivals. According to MS.4.3.4, the sacrificer should give a cow intended for load-bearing (*anaḍvāhī*) as the sacrificial gift. More details are found in ĀpŚS.18.9.6-9 that one has to offer a cake on eight potsherds to Agni, cooked rice of *gavīdhukā* grains to Rudra, curds to Indra and cooked food of barley grains to Varuṇa. In this regard a story is given in MS.4.3.4, while the gods were subduing the Asuras, first Agni was engaged in this task, then Varuṇa, then Rudra and lastly Indra came to join with them. As he came fourth in the serial that is why the *iṣṭi* is called *Indraturīyā* or 'the one connected with Indra the fourth'.

In MS.2.3.2 and MŚS.5.2.1.7-9 an *iṣṭi* is given to be performed by a sacrificer for the above purpose in which he has to offer cooked-rice to All-gods. Still another *iṣṭi* is prescribed in KS.10.9, according to which the sacrificer who has foes should offer a cake on eleven potsherds to Indra *pravabhra*. The *pravabhra* is said to be identical with thunderbolt and by performing this *iṣṭi* the sacrificer hurls the thunderbolt at his foe.

As an optional animal sacrifice meant for a sacrificer having foes TS.2.1.4.4-5; KS.13.4 and MS.2.5.3 prescribe one in which a barren cow is to be offered for Viṣṇu and Varuṇa and a bull for Indra. By offering for these three deities the sacrificer is supposed to cause his foe seized by Varuṇa, drive away his foe with the help of Viṣṇu the sacrifice and appropriate the powers of his foe with the help of Indra.

If a sacrificer has rivals he should offer a dwarfish goat to Viṣṇu. The place for this offering should be an uneven ground to be made even just before the offering (MS.2.3.5; KS.13.3; ĀpŚS.19.16.8; BŚS.24.39; HŚS.22.1.7; MŚS.5.2.10.14).

Another optional animal sacrifice meant for the same



purpose is mentioned in MS.2.5.8. In this a bull is to be offered to Indra – *abhimātighna* (killer of enemies). This sacrifice helps the sacrificer to kill his hostile foe.

One who has foes should offer a black-*lalāma* (horse or bull with a nice mark on its forehead) to Aśvins. Aśvins are identical with sky and earth and the sacrificer with this offering is said to expel his foe from these two places. Again the *Lalāma* and its black spots are identical with day and night respectively. Therefore this sacrifice is supposed to serve in killing the foes from day and night (KS.13.5).

There are some *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices of abhicāra type meant for the sacrificers who have rivalry in the field or with relative (*spardhamānaḥ kṣetre vā sajāteṣu vā*). In other words an individual if involved in any conflict with any relative or in any dispute over a field or landed property then he has to perform some optional *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices, with the help of which he will be able to overcome the people who go against him. Thus one finds in TS.2.2.3.1 one such *iṣṭi* is prescribed for a sacrificer who has rivalry over field or with relatives. The sacrificer is instructed to offer a cake on eight potsherds to Agni the youngest (*yaviṣṭha*). Thereby he is supposed to appropriate the strength of his foe and overcome him (cf. BŚS.13.5 and HŚS.22.2.14). In KS.10.7 a similar offering to the same deity is prescribed for a sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra.

Having dispute over field or with his neighbours a person is instructed to perform an *iṣṭi* with a cake on eleven potsherds to Indra and Agni. With this performance he can overpower the strength and power of his rivals (TS.2.2.12; MS.2.1.1; BŚS.13.2; HŚS.22.2.6; MŚS.5.1.5.8).

Some *iṣṭis* are prescribed in the Vedic ritual texts to be performed by a sacrificer who comes to know that his rival is sacrificing with Soma or engaged in the performance of a Soma sacrifice (*bhrātrīvyē yajamāne*). Vedic theologians and ritualists are of the opinion that if one's rival is sacrificing



while he is not sacrificing then the rival will gain all his strength and power (TS.2.2.9.4). In order to prevent this harm and to overpower the rival such *iṣṭis* are prescribed to be performed.

One of such optional sacrifices is called *adhvarakalpeṣṭi*. This *iṣṭi* one has to start before speech is uttered (before the birds make any sound), i.e. before dawn. It will help the sacrificer to gain all speeches of the rival. Just at the time of the morning pressing of the rival this sacrificer should offer a cake on eight potsherds to Agni and Viṣṇu, ghee to Sarasvatī and an oblation of cooked rice to Brhaspati. At the time of the midday pressing of the rival he should offer a cake on eleven potsherds to Agni and Viṣṇu, ghee to Sarasvatī and an oblation of cooked rice to Brhaspati. At the time of the third pressing of the rival he should offer a cake on twelve potsherds to Agni and Viṣṇu, ghee to Sarasvatī and an oblation of cooked rice to Brhaspati. When the rival offers the barren cow in his Soma sacrifice this sacrificer at that time should offer a cake on one potsherd to Mitra and Varuṇa (TS.2.2.9.4-7; KS.10.2; BŚS.13.16; HŚS.22.3; MŚS.5.1.6.32-36). It is further mentioned in TS.2.2.9.4-7 that the sacrificer of *adhvarakalpeṣṭi* is supposed to obtain the entire morning pressing of his rival's Soma sacrifice by offering a cake on eight potsherds to Agni and Viṣṇu. Because, the eight potsherds are connected with the eight syllables of the Gayatri metre (one *pāda* of the *Gāyatrī* metre) which is the sole metre in the morning pressing. Similarly with the help of a cake on eleven potsherds and another cake on twelve potsherds offered to Agni and Viṣṇu in the midday and third pressing of his rival respectively, the sacrificer is supposed to obtain the two pressings from his rival. Because the eleven and twelve potsherds are thought to be connected with the *triṣṭubh* metre of eleven syllables and with *jagatī* metre of twelve syllables (in each of their *pādas*) which are the main metres in the midday and third pressing of a Soma-sacrifice



respectively. Agni is said to be all gods and Viṣṇu is identical with sacrifice, Saraswatī is speech and Bṛhaspati is identical with Brahman. Therefore, by the offering to these four deities the sacrificer is said to set the gods against the gods of his rival, the sacrifice against his sacrifice, the speech against his speech and Brahman against his Brahman. One notices some variations regarding the offerings of this sacrifice in MS.2.1.7 and KS.10.1. Instead of ghee to Saraswatī these texts prescribe cooked rice (cf. MŚS.5.1.6.32). Again at the time of offering barren cow in the rival's Soma-sacrifice this sacrificer is instructed to offer either a cake on one potsherd or the whey (*payasyā*) to Mitra and Varuṇa (MS.2.1.7 and MŚS.5.1.6.32).

Another *iṣṭi* found in MS.2.2.11, is also meant for the same purpose. It is mentioned that if one's rival is sacrificing with Soma then one should offer a cake on eleven potsherds to Indra- Vajrin, another similar cake to Indra Vṛtraghna and still another similar cake to Indra Vṛtratur. It is prescribed in MŚS.5.1.10.45-48 that these three offerings are to be made at the time of the three pressings of the rival's Soma sacrifice respectively.

There are some optional *iṣṭis* meant for the practise of blackmagic and these are of miscellaneous type. Thus it is found, in order to create a foe to an enemy in his (enemy's) own abode, the sacrificer should offer cooked food to Soma and Rudra. In this *iṣṭi* half of the altar is to be dug up and remaining half should be left without digging, half of the straws should be spread on the altar and remaining half should not be spread, half of the kindling sticks should be put on the fire and the other half should not be put (cf. TS.2.2.10.5). While dealing with this *iṣṭi* BŚS.13.18 gives more details as follows – One has to remain within the boundary of the person's (enemy's) landed property, churn out new fires, spread out sacred fires in respective fire places and offer the oblation of cooked rice. According to BŚS.23.2, one has to throw the unused grass and kindling sticks in the



fire at the end of the sacrifice. While digging up the half of the altar one should either dig up the western or southern half of the altar only. Some other details are prescribed in MS.2.1.6; KS.11.5 and MŚS.5.1.6.15-17. Half of the sacrificial grass should be *sara* grasses and the other half should be *darbha* grasses. Half of the faggots are to be procured from the *vibhītaka* tree and the other half from some other tree. One should prepare the cooked food out of black rice and white rice mixed together and should cook the rice in the mixture of milk and water.

Another optional *iṣṭi* in this category is called *āgnāvaisṇava* to be performed by a sacrificer who has foes. The performer should offer a cake on eleven potsherds to Agni and Viṣṇu, cooked rice to Sarasvatī and cooked rice to Sarasvat. By the offerings to Viṣṇu he is supposed to appropriate the gods and the sacrifice of his enemy. By the offering to Sarasvatī and Sarasvat he is said to appropriate the pairing cattle of his enemy (TS.2.5.4.2; BŚS.17.47-48). However, according to ĀpŚS.3.16.5-9, one who is harassed by his enemy has to perform this *iṣṭi*.

There are some *iṣṭis* which are performed for the purpose of *pratyabhicāra* or counter blackmagic. These are to be performed by a person against whom his enemy has practised abhicāra. These sacrifices are useful not only to protect oneself from the (practised) abhicāra of the enemy but also to counter attack upon him.

The *tridhātavyeṣṭi* (mentioned earlier) meant for the practise of blackmagic (cf. TS.2.4.11.2) can serve as counter blackmagic as well (TS.2.4.11.3; BŚS.13.41-42). It is stated in the TS. that this performance with three constituents is the whole of the sacrifice and the sacrificer is supposed to sacrifice with "the whole of the sacrifice". Therefore, the person who practices witchcraft against him can not lay him low.

One finds in TS.2.2.9.2, another *iṣṭi* to be performed for



the purpose of abhicāra as well as *pratyabhicāra* (cf. MS.2.1.7; KS.10.1; BŚS.13.15; ĀpŚS.19.19.6; MŚS.5.1.6.23-26). In this *iṣṭi* there are four offerings to four deities namely Agni, Viṣṇu, Sarasvatī and Bṛhaspati. The text explains how it is useful for *pratyabhicāra* – by offering to Agni the sacrificer sets all gods against the gods of his enemy, by offering to Viṣṇu he sets sacrifice against the sacrifice of his enemy. Through the offering to Sarasvatī he sets the speech against the speech of his enemy and by means of the offering to Bṛhaspati he sets Brahman against the Brahman of his enemy. Between the gods and the sacrifice the sacrificer is said to creep along, so that he gets no injury from any quarter and who practises against him does not lay him low.

A person against whom abhicāra has been practised should offer a cake on eight potsherds to Agni the youngest (*yaviṣṭha*). By means of this offering the performer is said to recourse to Agni the youngest with his own share. There by Agni drives away Rakṣases from him. The person who practises abhicāra against him becomes unable to lay him low. This *iṣṭi* is found in MS.2.1.10; MŚS.5.1.7.29-30; BŚS.13.5 and HŚS.22.2.14 where it is only meant for *pratyabhicāra*. But in KS.10.7 it is prescribed for the sake of both abhicāra as well as *pratyabhicāra*.

According to MS.2.1.7 and MŚS.5.1.6.30 another *iṣṭi* is meant for a sacrificer against whom sorcery is performed. In this *iṣṭi* one offers a cake on eleven potsherds to Agni and Viṣṇu. Agni is considered to be all gods and Viṣṇu is identical with sacrifice. By performing this sacrifice the sacrificer is said to take rest between the gods and sacrifice (MS.2.1.7). In KS.10.1 the prescription slightly differs from MS. and the offering material is cooked rice with ghee to these deities.

In the above mentioned optional blackmagical *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices one finds the frequent use of some sacrificial materials and objects which are thought to have some occult power in themselves. For example, the use of *sara* grass as



sacrificial grass, *vibhītaka* wood for kindling sticks, the shape of the sacrificial post like the wooden sword and the use of black rice for the preparation of cooked food are prescribed in many *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices. It should be remembered that these abhicāra sacrifices are as good as other *Śrauta* sacrifices of *iṣṭi* and *paśu* type so far their structure is concerned. The texts only mention their peculiarities required for their serving the purpose of blackmagic or harming the enemy. Their other details are to be understood or practically to be carried out according to the regular prescriptions given under the descriptions of respective basic paradigms in the ritual texts. Thus the ritualists, by introducing those sacrifices in the ritual texts have provided these with some independent status as well as liturgical sanction.

#### (D) Special blackamgical Soma-sacrifices<sup>13</sup> (optional-type)

Some *Śrauta* sacrifices of Soma-type are also meant for the practise of sorcery against one's enemies because the mere existence of enemy is considered to be harmful<sup>14</sup>. It should be noted that such sacrifices are of optional nature and only who desires to cause harm to his enemies can perform these sacrifices. These do not form a part of obligatory rituals. There are a number of such black magical Soma-sacrifices found in the *Śrauta* ritual texts of the Vedas. In this section such sacrifices coming under various types of Soma-sacrifices like *sādyaskra*, *ekāha* and *ahīna* etc. are going to be discussed.

The term *sādyaskra* stands for a category of Soma-sacrifices in which all the performances are to be performed in one day only. Regarding the number of *sādyaskra*-type Soma-sacrifices there are various opinions<sup>15</sup>. According to some texts there are three *sādyaskras* (TMB.16.12.15; AśvŚS.9.5.12-7.21; ŚŚS.14.40-42). Some other texts mention that these are four (JB.2.115-121; BŚS.18.20-23; ĀpŚS.22.2.6-4.12). Still according to some



other texts their number is six including *Śyena* and *ekatrika* sacrifices (LŚS.8.3.4 and KŚS.22.2.8). But in most of the texts the first *sādyaskra* is prescribed to be performed by a sacrificer who has foes or who wants to practise abhicāra (TMB.16.12.2; JB.2.117; ĀpŚS.22.2.9; HŚS.17.1.26; MŚS.9.3.2.2; KŚS.22.2.10; ŚŚS.14.10.1). One comes across a story regarding its performance narrated in TMB.16.12.1. The Āditya's and Āṅgīrasas were consecrating themselves for a Soma-sacrifice. They contended for reaching the world of heaven. The Āṅgīrasas announced the Ādityas a sacrifice in which after the introductory days the proper Soma pressing should take place on the next day. Then the Ādityas beheld (by divine intuition) this sacrifice. They bought Soma on the day of the sacrifice itself, appointed Ayāsyā as their Udgātṛ, lauded with this (rite) and went to the world of heaven while the Āṅgīrasas were left behind. This story implies that this sacrifice enables the performer to surpass his rivals and his rivals being defeated are left behind. In this sacrifice a gift of white horse is made to a Brāhmaṇa delonging to Āṅgīrasa-clan or to the enemy of the sacrificer or to a hated Brahmin. This gift being given thus is thought to create some blackmagical effects on the recipient who is not a friend but as good as a foe<sup>16</sup>. It is mentioned in TMB.16.12.4 that the Ādityas while performing this sacrifice gave this gift to their Udgātṛ priest namely Ayāsyā who having accepted it is said to go amiss (*vyabhraṁśata*).

In JB.2.120, the second *sādyaskra* is treated as a double sacrifice called *anukriyau* and it is said to be meant for a sacrificer who has a foe superior to him. Regarding its performance the same text mentions that the Ādityas went first to heaven and thereby became superior to the Āṅgīrasas. But the Āṅgīrasas also got the same place by performing these two sacrifices and become equal to the Ādityas. A white mare is prescribed to be the sacrificial gift for this sacrifice (JB.2.121).



A person who has foes should sacrifice with the third *sādyaskra* namely *parikrī* (JB.2.122). There is a story narrated on the performance of this sacrifice by a mythological person called *Keśī Dārbhiya* who was contending with another person namely *Khaṇḍika-Haudbhārī* for the kingdom of *Pāñcāla*. As a result *Keśī* is said to have discarded *Khaṇḍika* from that land with the help of this sacrifice. It is implied from this story that this sacrifice helps the performer in overthrowing his rival. According to ŚŚS.14.40-42, which deals with three *sādyaskras*, if the rival sacrificer performs *anukrī* (the first *sādyaskra*) then one should perform *parikrī* (the second *sādyaskra*) and if the rival sacrificer performs with *parikrī* then one should perform with *utkrī* (the third one)<sup>17</sup>. These *sādyaskra* sacrifices are to be understood as compressed Soma sacrifices as all the major rituals starting from beginning to the end are to be carried out hurriedly in one day only. Naturally these performances are peculiar by nature in comparison with other two categories of Soma-sacrifices namely the *ekāhas* and *ahīnas*. That is why, perhaps, all the *sādyaskra* sacrifices are somehow or other connected with blackmagical effects or abhicāra.

Some Soma-sacrifices are characterized as *ekāhas* because in these the real pressing of Soma-plants and offering the juices last for one day excluding some preliminary ceremonies taking place prior to the pressing day. Since the pressing day is most important in a Somasacrifice it can fall into the *ekāha* category if having only one pressing day. Before going to discuss the peculiarities of some blackmagical *ekāha*-Soma-sacrifices, it will be better to mention a few general rules prescribed in some *Śrauta-sūtra* texts for these abhicāra sacrifices. In context of a discussion regarding various *ekāhas* one finds a list of eleven or twelve *ekāhas* meant for the purpose of blackmagic given in ŚŚS.14-22. These are namely *saṁśa*, *anustoma*, *iṣu*, *vajra*, *śyena*, *ajira*, *mṛtyu*, *antaka*, *kṣurapavi*,



*śirṣachid*, *mahas* and *śyena* (repeated) (cf. ŚŚS.14.22.4). Some of these sacrifices are also known from other sources as regular abhicāra sacrifices and these are *śyena*, *iṣu*, *vajra* and *anustoma* (another reading is *manustoma*)<sup>18</sup>.

Regarding the general procedures for all these abhicāra sacrifices mentioned in ŚŚS.14.22.5, one finds that two hymns called *manyu* (wrath) (from RV.10.83 and 84) are to be applied at their respective places in the performances. This means that these are to be used in the *niṣkevalya* and *maruttvaṭīya śāstras* respectively and the *nivid* formulas are to be inserted in these two hymns. The *Bṛhat Sāman* is to be applied on the Brahman's chant of the *iṣu* sacrifice (ŚŚS.14.22.7) and in all other abhicāra sacrifices the *abhīvarta sāman* is to be applied at the same place (ŚŚS.14.22.8).

Coming to the other details of general procedures one finds that the *sadas* (pendal) of these sacrifices is to be covered with sharp pointed reeds and reeds are also to be used as sacrificial grass (ŚŚS.14.22.9-13). These reeds are famous for their magical utility. They are thought to be similar with arrows and supposed to be useful in piercing the enemy<sup>19</sup>. One should make some bows lie down near the *sadas* pendal and the *āgnīdhra* shed (ŚŚS.14.22.10 and 12). This also is symbolical for shooting at the enemy. The kindling sticks and sacrificial post should be prepared out of the *bādhaka* and *vibhītaka* woods respectively (ŚŚS.14.22.14-15). The sacrificial ghee is to be prepared from the milk of a sick-cow and the hide of an *anustaraṇī* cow is to be used as the pressing leather (ŚŚS.14.22.16-17). *Anustaraṇī* is a cow to be slaughtered usually at the funeral ceremonies. The sick cow as well as the *anustaraṇī* cow both are believed to be inauspicious and therefore, their products like ghee and hide etc. are prescribed with an intention to create some inauspicious effects. For the pressing boards (*adhiṣavaṇa-phalaka*) one has to use two middle planks of the wheels of a cart that serves for carrying away the corpses to the place of



cremation (ŚŚS.14.22.18). This is another inauspicious object the use of which is believed to be harmful. A significant feature of these sacrifices is that the performers discharge their functions while wearing red turbans and having quivers filled with arrows, having the bow strings stretched and being girded with swords (ŚŚS.14.22.20). All these peculiarities make the performers appear like warriors in the battle field. These details of general procedures for the blackmagical Soma-sacrifices have the magical significance in order to destroy the enemy. Some more details are noticed in the BŚS.18.36 which are naturally not found in the performance of normal Soma-sacrifices. At the time of pressing the Soma-plants some drops of Soma-juice which adhere to garments or limbs of the priests who presses the Soma-plants are to be mixed with the juice drawn in the *upānśu* cup and before making the offering from it the priest should utter – “Kill N.N., then only I shall offer you.” Then the priest should stand there restraining his breath as long as he can. The drop of juice adhered to garments and limbs of the priest are considered to have some magical power. Moreover, the *upānśu* cup after being filled with juice is to be put on the mound (*khara*) with the words – “Thus I put you on the life breath of N. N.”, in all these abhicāra sacrifices. It appears from these rites that the *upānśu* cup has a special importance from the viewpoint of blackmagic. In the following lines some particular rites in each of the blackmagical Soma-sacrifices will be discussed.

- (a) *Śyena* : The sacrifice called *Śyena* (falcon) is the most important among all the abhicāra sacrifices found in the Vedic texts. According to ṢaḍVB.4.2.2, a person who desires to practise abhicāra should perform the *śyena* sacrifice (cf. ĀśvŚS.9.7.1; ŚŚS.14.22.4; ĀpŚS.22.4.3; HŚS.17.2.19; KŚS.22.3.1; MŚS.9.3.2.22). The *śyena* or falcon is known as the swiftest among all the birds and just as the falcon



catches other birds and smaller creatures the sacrificer of this *śyena* sacrifice is said to catch his enemy in the same way with the help of this sorcery rite (ṢaḍVB.4.2.3). In each of the three *pavamāna* lauds of this sacrifice the *trivṛt stoma* is to be applied (ṢaḍVB.4.2.4; BŚS.18.36). As the two oblation holders (*havirdhāna* - carts), one should use two chariots having two wheels (ṢaḍVB.4.2.6; ĀpŚS.22.4.14; HŚS.17.2.20; KŚS.22.3.13; MŚS. 9.3.2.25). These two chariots are said to be identical with thunderbolts and using them the sacrificer is supposed to throw the thunderbolt at his foe to defeat him (ṢaḍVB.4.2.6). But in BŚS.18.36 only one *havirdhāna* cart is prescribed. The sacrificial post is to be made out of *tilvaka* or *bādhaka* wood and it should be shaped like a wooden sword at its top (ṢaḍVB.4.2.16; ĀpŚS.22.4.15; HŚS.17.2.21; KŚS.22.3.9; MŚS.9.3.2.26). According to MŚS. 9.3.2.26 and KŚS.22.3.7, the post should not have any wooden cup (*caṣāla*) on its top which is essential in normal Soma-sacrifices. The planks for the pressing of Soma-juice are to be made from the central planks of the wheel of a cart used in carrying the dead bodies (ṢaḍVB.4.2.17; ĀpŚS. 22.4.16; HŚS.17.2.22; ŚŚS.14.22.18; KŚS.22.3.12; MŚS.9.3.2.25; LŚS.8.5.6). Instead of being offered immediately just after they are drawn the *upāṁśu* and *antaryāma* cups are to be put down on the mound before offering (ṢaḍVBr.4.2.19; ĀpŚS. 22.4.18; BŚS.18.36; HŚS.17.2.24). The *sara* grass is used as sacrificial grass and the faggots are to be procured from the *vibhītaka* tree (ṢaḍVB.4.2.20-21; ĀpŚS.22.4.19 and 21; AŚS.9.7.5 and 7; ŚŚS. 14.22.13; KŚS.22.3.10-11; HŚS.17.2.25-26; MŚS.9.3.2.26). According to ĀŚS.9.7.7 one should use *vibhītaka* or *vāghātaka* wood for faggots. The



priests are instructed to discharge their sacred functions wearing red turbans, red clothes, the sacred cords round their neck and they should carry swords in their hands (ṢaḍVB.4.2.22; ĀŚS.9.7.4; ĀpŚS.22.4.23; HŚS.17.2.27; KŚS.22.3.15-16; MŚS.9.3.2.24; LŚS.8.5.8). They are also instructed to carry quivers fully loaded with arrows and hold up the strings of their bows stretched with arrows (KŚS.22.3.17-18; LŚS.8.5.8; cf. ŚŚS.14.22.20). According to MŚS.9.3.2.25, the pressing leather which is to be put on the pressing boards is to be prepared from the hide of a cow slaughtered at a funeral ceremony (cf. ŚŚS.14.22.17). The enclosing sticks (*paridhayah.*) for this sacrifice consist of arrows according to ĀpŚS.22.4.22, but clubs (*muṣalāḥ*) are prescribed in ĀŚS.9.7.6 to be used for the same purpose. The ground for the performance of *śyena* sacrifice should be a barren land which is ploughed or sown (MŚS.9.3.2.23). Various choices for this ground are found in KŚS.22.3.2-6 and LŚS.8.5.4-5. The land where no plant can ever grow or where the growing plants burnt away may be used for this purpose. Or it should have stumps of trees and shrubs which are shattered or the place from where the roots of the trees have been uprooted. The place must be inclined towards south. The land having these qualities or rather defects are believed to be endowed with some sort of occult power.

The sacrificial gifts of the *Śyena* sacrifice are also significant. In ṢaḍVB.4.2.23-24 it is mentioned that in each group of the sacrificial gifts (= cows) there should be nine cows. By giving these gifts the enemy is made 'renewed'. This has been explained in Sayana's commentary as follows – to 'renew' the enemy means that the enemy meets death and again



takes birth with a new body. In the groups of cows there are nine one-eyed cows with defective horns. The details of the groups of nine cows are found in the texts like ĀpŚS.22.4.24; HŚS.17.2.28; KŚS.22.3.19; LŚS.8.5.16 which are more or less similar to those given by Sayana. According to these texts those cows must be quint-eyed or one eyed, limping, hunch-backed, having their horns broken and tails cut etc. While being given the cows are to be pricked with thorns till blood comes out on their body (ĀpŚS.22.4.25; HŚS.17.2.29; KŚS.22.3.22; LŚS.8.5.17). The Śyena sacrifice serves as the basic paradigm for the other blackmagical Somasacrifices. The Vedic texts mention only a very few details of these sacrifices which are different from those of the Śyena sacrifice.

(b) *Ajira* : The *ajira* sacrifice is modeled on the Śyena sacrifice and found to be mentioned in ĀśvŚS.9.7.1 and ŚŚS.14.22.4. Other texts do not deal with this sacrifice.

(c) *Iṣu* : The *ekāha* called *iṣu* or 'arrow' is described as *trivṛtdagniṣṭoma* in ṢaḍVB.4.3.1. Because in all its three *pavamāna stotras* the *trivṛtstoma* is to be applied. While chanting these *pavamāna stotras* with *trivṛtstoma* the chanters are instructed to apply the *viṣṭuti* called *iṣu* which is meant for incantation and prescribed in ṢaḍVB.4.3.2. Some other texts also mention this sacrifice (ĀpŚS.22.7.17; HŚS.17.3.16; BŚS.18.36; ĀśvŚS.9.8.19; MŚS.9.3.3.20 and LŚS.9.4.36). In ṢaḍVB.4.3.3-4 it is further mentioned that the *viṣṭuti* called *iṣu* is to be used in this sacrifice in order to tear the enemy into pieces before the end of his normal life span and the *trivṛtstoma* is considered as the swiftest among all the stomas. So its use in this sacrifice is supposed to enable the



sacrificer to kill his enemy quickly. Excepting some special *sāmāns* prescribed to be used in this sacrifice all other details are similar to those in the *śyena* sacrifice (ṢaḍVB.4.3.7; ĀpŚS.22.7.18; BŚS.18.36; HŚS.17.3.17; MŚS.9.3.3.20). In ĀpŚS.22.7.19, it is instructed to give a brown horse to the Brahman priest as the sacrificial gift.

- (d) *Samdamśa* : A person who wants to practise incantation should sacrifice with the *ekāha* called *samdamśa* or 'tongs' (ṢaḍVB.4.4.2; ĀpŚS.22.13.13; HŚS.17.5.34; BŚS.18.36; KŚS.22.11.27; MŚS. 9.3.5.31; LŚS.9.4.37). Tongs are usually used to take hold of something which is difficult to take hold of otherwise. Thus a pig or a red-hot iron can only be held with the help of the tongs. This sacrifice consists of chants with two *stomas* at a time and thereby resembles a pair of tongs. This procedure of chants enables the sacrificer to take a hold of his enemy in the same manner (ṢaḍVB.4.4.3-4). According to Sayana these pairs of *stomas* are two *trivṛt stomas*, two *dvādaśa stomas*, two *pañcadaśa stomas*, two *ekaviṃśa stomas*, two *caturviṃśa stomas* and two *triṇava stomas*. There is a prohibition for the use of *saptadaśa stoma* in this sacrifice and the purpose of the prohibition is to cause injury (ṢaḍVB.4.4.9). It is known from other sources that the *saptadaśa stoma* stands for cattle (cf. ŚB.8.4.3.11) and this exclusion from the chants from this sacrifice is supposed to make the sacrificers enemy destitute of cattle<sup>20</sup>. Other details are same as those in *śyena* (ṢaḍVB.4.4.10; ĀpŚS.22.13.4; HŚS.17.5.34). One finds some additional details in MŚS.9.3.5.33-38. The place for the altar is to be dug up as far as the sacrificial post extends (MŚS.9.3.5.33). He should place the eleven victims from the east to west on a sloping place (MŚS.9.3.5.34). Twelve thousand bulls and one



thousand horses are to be given as gifts (MŚS.9.3.5.36). According to KŚS.22.11.33 and LŚS.9.4.38 this sacrifice should be performed against the foe who is a king.

- (e) *Vajra* : (thunderbolt) – This blackmagical Soma sacrifice leads the sacrificer to hurl the thunderbolt at his foe (ṢaḍVB.4.5.1; ĀpŚS.22.13.13; BŚS.18.36; HŚS.17.5.34; ĀśvŚS.9.8.19; KŚS.21.11.25; LŚS.9.4.37). This sacrifice is quite similar to the *saṁdamśa* sacrifice (cf. ṢaḍVB.4.5.8) with a few differences of the *sāmans* and *stomas* used in it. Both of these are often found to be mentioned together due to their close similarity (cf. ĀpŚS.22.13.13; HŚS.17.5.34; and KŚS.22.11.35). According to some ritualists *vajra* is a Soma-sacrifice of *ukthya* type with the *ṣoḍaśin* laud at the end (ṢaḍVB.4.5.4; ĀpŚS.22.13.13 and KŚS.12.11.28). The purpose of adding the *ṣoḍaśin stotra* at the end of this sacrifice is to enable the sacrificer to hurl it at his foe as the *stotra* is identical with thunderbolt (cf. ṢaḍVB.4.5.5). The cow meant for purchasing Soma plants in this should have a yellow mouth or red ears (KŚS.22.11.29). Through this sacrifice one should practise abhicāra against the subjects of a king (KŚS.22.11.34 and LŚS.9.4.38). In these two texts, as mentioned earlier, the *saṁdamśa* sacrifice is prescribed to be performed against a king only (cf. KŚS.22.11.33 and LŚS.9.4.38). But an option to this prescription is also found in these texts. A performer can practise sorcery with *saṁdamśa* against the subjects of a king and with *vajra* against a king (KŚS.22.11.35 and LŚS.9.4.39). Another important aspect of these two sacrifices is that the performer is instructed to perform a *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice as a rite of expiation after the performance of either of these two sacrifices (cf. KŚS.22.11.36 and



LŚS.9.4.40). The expiatory rites are generally performed to remove the sins caused by the mistakes committed during the performances of sacrifices. This suggests that the performance of these sacrifices are considered to be sinful and for the removal of that sin the *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice is required to be performed.

- (f) *Vighana* : The *ekāha* Soma sacrifice called *vighana* can be performed for the sake of sorcery (ĀpŚS. 22.13.12; ĀśvŚS.9.7.32; HŚS.17.5.33; ŚŚS.14.39.8). In TB.2.7.18.2 this sacrifice is prescribed to be performed by a king who is not honoured by his subjects or according to Sāyaṇa, 'who does not receive due taxes from them' and who desires to bring his subjects under his control. However, in KŚS.22.11.24 and LŚS.9.4.3 there is a mention of two *vighanas* meant for the purpose of abhicāra. In TMB.19.18 and 19 one also comes across two *vighana* sacrifices. In this latter text there are two stories narrated in connection with these sacrifices and the knowledge of the stories is said to lead the knower to drive away his adversaries. The story about the first *vighana* is as follows – Indra, desiring to drive away his evil adversary saw this *ekāha* and with the help of this he could drive away his adversaries (TMB.19.18.2). For the second *vighana* another story runs thus – Indra was persecuted by ungodly illusion, he resorted to Prajāpati who gave him this *vighana*, by means of which Indra could drive away all his enemies (TMB.19.19.1). According to LŚS.9.4.36 the procedure of this sacrifice is similar to the procedure of the sacrifice called *iṣu*. It is mentioned in KŚS.22.11.26 that the sacrificial gifts are similar to the gifts given in the



*agniṣṭoma* sacrifice (which is the basic paradigm of all types of Soma-sacrifices).

(g) *Goṣṭoma* : There are two *goṣṭoma* sacrifices, one is of *agniṣṭoma* type and the other is of *atirātra* type<sup>21</sup>. Both are prescribed to be performed for the sake of blackmagic. According to ĀpŚS.22.1.6 and HŚS.17.1.8, one who has foes should sacrifice with this *ekāha* called *goṣṭoma*. It is said in TMB.16.2.22 that the gods by means of this sacrifice drove away the Asuras from these worlds and he who knows this also drives away his rivals from these worlds. About the name of the sacrifice, i.e. *go*, a narration is given in the same text that the gods pushed away (*agovayan*) the Asuras from these worlds. Thence it has the name 'go'. The person who knows this pushes away his rivals. Another *goṣṭoma* is found in TMB.20.6 which is an overnight rite (*atirātra*). One who has rivals should perform it (TMB.20.6.1; ĀśvŚS.10.1.4; KŚS.23.1.16 and HŚS.17.5.42).

(h) *Abhijit* : An *atirātra* type of *ekāha* sacrifice namely *Abhijit* is to be performed by a person who has foes (TMB.20.8.1; ĀśvŚS.10.1.4; KŚS.23.1.20; MŚS.9.3.6.10). It is said in TMB.20.8.1 that the gods by means of *abhijit* sacrifice took away these worlds from the Asuras and by means of the overnight rite (*atirātra*) they vanquished the Asuras for good and all. The sacrificer who performs this sacrifice is also supposed to do the same against his enemy.

(i) *Śada and Chada* : A person who desires to repel his bad lot and personal enemies should perform the one day Soma-sacrifice called *śada* (ŚŚS.14.22.23, for this sacrifice in general see also JB.2.82 and BŚS.18.44-45). The peculiarity of this sacrifice is that while reciting the *śāstras* the priests have to omit the last but one verse from each *śāstra* (ŚŚS. 14.22.24).



A similar peculiarity is found in another *ekāha* called *chada* which is meant for a sacrificer who has foes (ĀpŚS.22.11.9). Here the omission is prescribed to be made of one verse from each *stotra* (laud). By this omission it is believed that the enemy will be destroyed (ĀpŚS.22.11.10-11). Omission of something from the essential parts of these sacrifices is believed to work against the enemy. Because, in this case, omission creates confusion in the verbal rites of the performances and it is also known from other sources that confused recitations in the sacrificial performances yield harmful results against the enemy of the performer (cf. AB.3.3).

A group of four *ekāhas* are mentioned in BŚS.18.48 and they are meant for abhicāra practices. All of their *pavamāna stotras* are to be chanted with the *trivṛt stoma*. In each of these four sacrifices an extra offerings of cake to Agni of different attributes is prescribed to be made. One of these sacrifices is called *praṇoda ekāha* in which one has to offer a cake on eight potsherds to Agni *pravat* after the *savanīyapaśu puroḍāśa* – offering at the morning pressing. Another cake on eight potsherds is offered to Agni *vibādhavat* at the midday pressing of the second *ekāha* sacrifice called *vibādha*. Similarly in the third *ekāha* called *pratinoda* one has to offer a cake on eight potsherds to Agni *pratīkavat* at the third pressing. The last *ekāha* is known as *atīvyādha* in which an extra offering of a cake on eight potsherds to Agni *Vasumat* is offered after the offering of *paśupuroḍāśa* of the *anubandhyāpaśu* sacrifice at the end of the same *ekāha*.

The names of some other *ekāha* Soma-sacrifices of abhicāra type are given in some ritual texts but their details are not known. These sacrifices are *Viṣuvat stoma* (*atirātra*-type) mentioned in ĀśvŚS.10.1.2; *Viṣvajit* in ĀpŚS.22.13.25; *Vinuti* and *Abhibhūti* in AśvŚS.9.8.19; *Bhuḥ* in ĀśvaŚS.9.5.11; *Rṣabha* in ŚŚS.14.23.1; *Upahavya* in JB.2.150 and MŚS.9.3.4.1; *Apūrva* in MŚS.9.3.3.19 and *Manustoma* in JB.



2.169. This last one seems to be the same as *anustoma*<sup>22</sup> mentioned in ŚŚS.14.22.4.

There are some abhicāra types Soma-sacrifices falling into the category of *ahīna* in which there are two to twelve Soma-pressing days and these are as follows—

- (a) *Dvirātra* : In JB.2.235 a two days soma-sacrifice (*dvirātra*) is prescribed to be performed by a person who has a foe superior to him. A superior foe is considered as prosperous earlier (*pūrvapreta*) and the performance of this sacrifice is supposed to enable the sacrificer to get all properties from his foe.
- (b) *Viśvāmitrasya saṁjayaḥ* : A person who has enemies should perform a four days somasacrifice called *Viśvāmitrasya saṁjayaḥ* or *Viśvāmitra's* victory (TMB.21.12.3; cf. also ĀpŚS.22.20.2; HŚS.17.7.12; ĀśvŚS.10.2.25). Its origin is narrated through a story given in TMB.21.12.2, the *Jahnus* and *Vṛcivats* (two races) were quarrelling for the possession of a kingdom. Viśvāmitra the king of Jahnus saw this sacrifice and performed the same. As a result he got the kingdom and *Vṛcivats* were deprived of it. This story implies that the sacrificer by performing this sacrifice can defeat his rival in a conflict with him regarding the possession of property and gain all the properties for him.
- (c) *Antarmahāvra* : A five day soma sacrifice called *Antarmahāvra* is meant for a sacrificer who has foes (ĀpŚS.22.21.12-13 and HŚS.17.7.30).
- (d) *Daiva* : Another five days soma-sacrifice namely *Daiva* is mentioned in ĀśvŚS.10.2.27 for a sacrificer who has foes. It is suggestive here that the performance of this sacrifice may enable the sacrificer either to defeat his foes in conflict or destroy them magically.



(e) *Viśvesām devānām abhyāsaṅgyaḥ* : This is also a five days soma-sacrifice mentioned in MŚS.9.4.2.15. It literary means – “the internally attached one of the All gods.” Any sacrificer having enemies can perform this sacrifice.

(f) *Samśagyau* : Two sevendays soma-sacrifices called *samśagyau* are prescribed for a person who desires to practise abhicāra or who is contending with his rivals (JB.2.310). A story mentioned in the above text explains the blackmagical character of these two sacrifices as follows – Jamadagni (a seer) was the house chaplain of *Māhenas* (a race of kings). Though he made the *Māhenas* prosperous they went against him. Then he wanted to kill their domestic animals seven by seven daily. He saw these two sacrifices and performed with these and achieved his desired goal, i.e. he could kill the domestic animals of the *Māhenas* seven by seven daily<sup>23</sup>. These two sacrifices are identified with an unpierced thunderbolt with which the sacrificer is supposed to kill his hated foes.

(g) *Devapur* : Among the ten days soma-sacrifices there is one called ‘the divine citadel’ (*‘devapur’* or only *‘pur’*) (TS.7.2.5.3-4). This is to be performed by a sacrificer who has foes (TS.7.2.5.4). It can be performed for the sake of counter-abhicāra also. In the texts like TMB.27.17.3; ĀpŚS.22.24.1; HŚS.17.8.34; KŚS.23.5.24; MŚS.9.4.3.35 this sacrifice is meant for the practise of *pratyabhicāra* only. But in ĀśvŚS.10.3.25 it is prescribed for the practise of abhicāra only. According to TS.7.2.5.3-4; JB.2.322 and BŚS.16.31 this sacrifice is meant for both the purposes.

## Conclusion

It seems from the above given details that the practise



of blackmagic pervades all over the Vedic ritual. There are frequent descriptions on certain rites which are obligatory by nature but can be effective blackmagically irrespective of the sacrificer's desire to cause harm to his enemies or not. In addition to these there are a number of intentional harmful rites coming in the course of regular sacrificial performances. The blackmagical effects of such rituals are thought to be achieved by introducing some changes in the regular procedures and the changes are of different types such as changes in sequences, directions, places, change in order or manner of performance, changes in various recitations and utterances of Vedic texts etc. Sometimes even non-performance of any obligatory rite or any extra performance added to the obligatory ones can also be useful for harming the enemy. Moreover there is provision for counter blackmagic which can be offensive as well as defensive. A noteworthy feature of all these rites is that the priests can, if they want, cause harm to their sacrificer for the benefit of whom they are appointed into different priestly positions if at all they are dissatisfied with him.

There is a lot of similarity between the blackmagical rituals which form a part of obligatory rituals and those which are of purely optional nature. In all these rites one finds that something which is different from the normal way of performance is supposed to create some harm to the enemy. Though there are a few blackmagical sacrifices which are of artificial nature having few characteristics of their own. The special blackmagical sacrifice called *śyena* and the variations of this sacrifice possess distinct characteristics of blackmagical nature. A study of these rites reveals the efforts of the Vedic texts to give sanction to sorcery in the established ritual and there is no hesitation on the part of the ritualists as well as Vedic theologians noticed any where to include such harmful rites inside the sacred sacrificial performances and their descriptions.



## References

1. The word sometimes used in the sense of soma-juice put in a cup meant for offering to any deity. It is also used in the sense of cup containing the juice. Sometimes it also stands for the ritual connected with it. cf. *Dictionary of Vedic Ritual*, p.64.
2. For the procedure of setting these bricks see Keith's comments on TS.4.3.8. f.n. 1, p.332.
3. These imitative magical activities are based on the sympathetic theory of magic and particularly the homeopathic one. According to this theory an effect resembles its cause. cf. *The Golden Bough* (abgd. ed.), p.11.
4. **Gonda** mentions that the killing of the dog in this rite is a symbolical action indicating the punishment of the enemy. cf. *Eye and gaze in the Veda*, p.71.
5. The fire brand burning at both the sides is used for protection from enemies etc. cf. **Gonda**, *Vedic Ritual*, p.101.
6. The abhicāra rites can be modified according to the position of enemy. cf. **Gonda**, *Vedic Ritual*, p.254.
7. cf. **Gonda**, *Eye and gaze in the Veda*, p.3 and 19.
8. In this context MS.3.3.5 does not mention the number three for going round the fire.
9. cf. **Keith**, his translation to TS. pt. II, f.n.1, p.551.
10. Deficiency in various sacrificial substances produces harm. cf. **Gonda** *Vedic Ritual*, p.361.
11. In this context the word *nyūnā* is to be connected with the sands which are to be poured in the pan (see also Sayana's commentary and **Caland's** translation to ĀpŚS.16.26.10). But according to **Keith** it is to be connected with the size of the pan.
12. The plant *apāmārga* is supposed to possess some magical power to eradicate evil spirits and demons or any evil influence caused by them. cf. AV.4.17 and 18, ŚB.5.2.4.14 and TB.1.7.1.8. For the apotropaic nature of *apāmārga* see **Thite**, *Medicine*, p.113.
13. For the blackmagical sacrifices in general see **Thite**, *Sacrifice in the Brāhmaṇa Texts*, p.177.
14. He who has a foe is considered to be overpowered by 'distress' (*anīhas*) and who has a foe superior to him is considered to be 'vain' (*mṛdh.*), defeated, overpowered (KS.10.10).
15. cf. **Caland's** translation to PañcVB. f.n. to PañcVB.16.2, p.446.
16. The harmfulness of some sacrificial gifts will be discussed later



- on. See also Thite G. U., "Non attractive Dakṣiṇās in Śrauta Ritual", VIJ, pt. 1-2, p.42.
17. These names of these sacrifices are not given in their respective places where they are prescribed. But from the statements given in ŚSS.14.42.6, it implies that these sacrifices are called *anukrī*, *parikrī* and *utkrī* serially.
  18. cf. Caland's f.n. to his tr. to ŚSS.14.22.4, p.385.
  19. According to Sāyaṇa *sara* grass is etymologically connected with *śirtyai* which means to hurt.
  20. In ŚB.8.4.3.11 one reads "it is there with (*saptadaśa stoma*), they then sang praises, the tame animals were created", cf. Bollee's f.n. to his tr. to ṢaḍVB.3.10.9, p.87 and the commentary of Sāyaṇa.
  21. The soma-sacrifices differ from each other according to their recitations, chants and offerings of extra cups of soma-juice. *Atirātra* is an overnight soma-sacrifice.
  22. cf. Caland's f. n. to his tr. to ŚSS.14.22.4, p.385, there he suggests to read *manustoma* instead of *anustoma* mentioned in the original text.
  23. cf. the same story in context of the *sāman* called *saptaha* in JB.1.152.



## 3

## GRHYA (DOMESTIC) ABHICĀRA RITES

Grhya rituals form an important part of the Vedic ritual. The details of this ritual are found in different *grhyasātras*. Unlike the *Śrauta* rituals the performer of *grhyarites* usually needs only one fire and one priest. Sometimes an assistant is employed to help the priest. In certain cases the householder himself can perform the rites without taking the help of any priest. Even some of these rites can be performed without fire also. Therefore, these rites are less complicated and more popular than their *Śrauta* counterparts. Usually the performers of *grhya* rites are expected to know how to recite a Vedic verse or utter a formula without mistake as one finds such rituals are many times required to be accompanied with the recitations or utterances from Vedic texts. Thus, while being more familiar to the common men of the society such rituals still maintain their sacred Vedic mantras.

Along with the prescriptions of different domestic rites to be performed by a householder one comes across some blackmagical rites in the *grhya* ritual texts of the Vedic literature.<sup>1</sup> These blackmagical rites are to be performed against the enemy of the householder. Such rites are mainly found in the *Kauśīka Grhya Sūtra* and a few in other *grhyasūtras* also. There is a complete chapter consisting of three subchapters in the *KauSū.* fully devoted to the description of abhicāra rites. In some other chapters of this text which deal with battle rites, women rites etc. also some



abhicāra rites are found. This text belongs to the Atharvanic tradition and the rites described in this text are to be accompanied with the recitations of the portions from the AV. This text also mentions some *pratyabhicāra* rites (counterblackmagic) one of which is known to be *pratikṛtyā* or *kṛtyāpratiharāṇa* (i.e. counter action of *kṛtyā*). Thus the *Kauśika Gṛhya Sūtra* plays a very important role in the study of Vedic blackmagic. This chapter is mainly based upon the details of blackmagic found in the KauSū. of the AV.

Some general rules regarding abhicāra are given in KauSū.47.1-11. Similar rules are also noticed in the AVPariśiṣṭa 31.8.5-6; 31.9.1-3.<sup>2</sup> Gonda has rightly described these rules as technicalities of abhicāra in contrast with the normal rites.<sup>3</sup>

### General rules

For all the domestic abhicāra rites the *śara* grass (reed) is to be used as sacrificial grass for strewing on the place of ritual (altar). These reeds are cut on both sides, i.e. at their root as well as their top parts<sup>4</sup> (KauSū.47.1; cf. AVPari. 31.9.1). During the performance of other domestic rites the *barhis* grass is spread on the altar and the same is cut only at the root.<sup>5</sup> All the requisites meant for abhicāra rites are to be brought towards the southern side of the altar and these requisites are technically called '*āṅgirasa sambhāra*'<sup>6</sup> (KauSū.47.2). Whereas the requisites in other rites are put towards the northern side of the altar (cf. KauSū.7.10). The term *sambhāra* or the requisites stands for grass, faggots, utensils, water etc. which are to be used during the performances of the rites.<sup>7</sup> For all the abhicāra rites of domestic type one is instructed to use the *iṅgiḍa* oil for the purpose of offerings etc. instead of ghee (*ājya*) which is normally used (KauSū.47.3). There is an instruction for the performer or the appointed priest to carry out all these performances with his left hand, left leg, turning towards his left side etc. (KauSū.47.4). In other words whenever it is



required the performer should use his left limbs instead of the right ones. The left side is generally considered to be inauspicious and causing harm<sup>8</sup>. The performances should start at the north side and end in the south (KauSū.47.5) Where as the usual or auspicious rites are concluded either in the east or in the north (cf. KauSū.1.15). The ground or the place of all such performances should be inclined towards the south and should have natural hollows, while performing, the performer is instructed to face towards south (KauSū.47.6). During the performance of abhicāra rites there are three offerings to be offered with the recitation of specific hymns and verses from AV. These offerings are—

- (1) 'the introductory offerings' (*purastāddhoma*) consisting of five oblations offered to five deities with accompaniment of the recitation of AV.2.19-23.2.
- (2) 'the two offerings of ghee' (*ājyabhāgau*) which are to be offered just before the main offering and accompanied with the recitation of AV.5.29.2-3.
- (3) 'the offering made at the end' (*saṁsthita homa*) which is to be made with the recitation of AV.6.75 (KauSū.47.8,9,10). The suitable times for such harmful rituals as instructed in the text are, when the moon comes in contact with the star *kyttikā*, the dark half of the month or the day when the moon and the sun dwell together (*amāvāsyā*) and preferably during the afternoon period (KauSū.47.11) of the day.

### Consecration (*dīkṣā*)

The performer of these abhicāra rites has to undergo a consecration ceremony of which some peculiarities are given in the text. He should cut a bamboo staff called *āṅgirasa daṇḍa* uttering the hymn AV.2.12 (KauSū.47.12). In context of the consecration in other rituals or sacrifices the performer uses



to hold a staff of *palāśa* or *nyagrodha* or *udumbara* wood<sup>9</sup> but in this context the prescription of bamboo staff is an exception. He should put a kindling stick of *bādhaka* wood in fire uttering a verse from AV.6.132.3 (KauSū.47.13). A girdle is to be prepared out of the rope made of *ekavārā* grass and the girdle should be of two folds. After preparing the girdle he rubs the girdle and the staff with the remnants of ghee of an offering (*sampāta*) while uttering AV.3.133 and 134 (KauSū.47.14). It is well known that the girdle used by a consecrated sacrificer of Śrauta ritual is of three folds and to be prepared out of *muñja*-grass (ĀpŚS.10.9.13). The performer binds the girdle on his waist with recitation of AV.6.133.1-3 and takes the staff in his hand while uttering the formula – “Thou art thunderbolt... etc.” (KauSū.47.15-16). He is instructed to perform certain rites daily starting from the day of consecration up to the end of the abhicāra rite. The knot of the girdle is to be smeared with the cooked rice daily (KauSū.47.17). He should fling the staff with its point downward in the direction of the ground outside of the place of performance for three times daily and should simultaneously utter AV.6.134 (KauSū.47.18). Inside the place of performance he should touch the ground with water (KauSū.47.19). At the time of his daily eating and drinking he is instructed to utter the hymn from AV.6.135 (KauSū.47.20). Moreover, in each time whenever he eats or drinks he should strike the vessel or bowl uttering “*phaṭ*, N. N. is killed.” (KauSū.47.21). Every day he should make the girdle tighter with the formula – ‘here I separate the in breath and out breath of the son of N. N., of the lineage such and such’, (KauSū.47.22). There are some general prescriptions to be followed by a performer of any major domestic rite of abhicāra which are peculiar by nature and meant for causing harm to the enemies.

### Details of the abhicāra rites

There are a number of abhicāra rites of domestic



category and of various types found in the text of the KauSū.47.23-49.27.

Many abhicāra rites consist mainly of some offerings made in fire. When the oblation material is not mentioned it is to be understood that the *ingiḍa* is to be offered. Beause, in the abhicāra rites this oil is the substitute of *ājya* which is the normal oblation material in general. Each of these offerings are accompanied with the recitations of different hymns or verses from the AV. Thus, in one of such rites the performer, after the usual strewing of grasses on the altar, spreads again some *śara* grasses on the altar for three times with the help of his thumb finger. Then he extinguishes the original fire from the altar and carries forward new fire by means of a fire pan putting in it some *śara* grass and some wild grains and keeping all these inside a basket. He places the new fire in the fire place and makes an offering of *ingiḍa* oil which he has to besprinkle with poison. He is instructed to make this offering by means of a leaf from a red *aśvattha* tree. While he spreads *śara* grass and offers in the fire he has to utter the hymn from AV.6.75 (KauSū.48.29-31). The performer of another abhicāra rite is instructed to make use of a ladle of *vikaṅkata* wood with which he offers *ingiḍa* oil in the fire enkindled with the help of fire sticks from the *vikaṅkata* wood. He should utter the hymn AV.5.8 at the time of his offering (KauSū.48.8). In another abhicāra rite also one has to offer *ingiḍa* oil reciting the text from AV.6.37 (KauSū.48.25). Still in another offering rite the performer has to put down some reeds with their top parts directed towards the west of the fire place and to go towards the north direction as far as possible until he begins to perspire. Then after coming back to the fire he should besmear the reed points with his sweat and offer them in the fire uttering AV.2.12 (KauSū.47.43-44). Similarly he should put the breast and head of a dead lizard inside the skin of the same lizard and keeping these materials to the west of the fire he goes towards the north direction.



After coming back he should smear these materials with his sweat and offer these in the fire (KauSū.47.45). The performer is further instructed to take some dusts from the foot-print of his foe by means of the skin of a dead lizard. Putting these towards the west of the fire he goes towards the north direction and coming back he offers the same in the fire after besmearing these with his sweat (KauSū.47.45). In these two rites the performer while offering should utter AV.2.12. In order to nullify the offerings of a foe who has established the sacred fires, the magician priest offers a sacrificial cake in the fire reciting AV.6.45 and 7.70 (KauSū.48.27). For the same purpose he can also offer the husks of grains in the fire by means of a middle *palāśa* leaf reciting these two hymns (KauSū.48.28). The performer of another rite is advised to prepare a cake by baking it in the sun-shine. He has also to liquify some *ingīḍa* oil by means the sunshine. Then he offers the entire cake accompanied with the offering of the *ingīḍa* oil while uttering AV.7.77 (KauSū.48.39).

In some other rites some fire sticks are to be put in fire and these sticks are thought to be helpful in destroying the enemy. A performer is instructed to put some kindling sticks in the fire enkindled in the forest. These sticks are prepared from the trees which are designated as 'rival annihilating' (*sapatna kṣayaṇī*). While putting these in fire he should utter the hymn from AV.2.18 (KauSū.48.1). Such trees are found to be enumerated in KauSū.16.14 as follows – *aśvattha*, *bādhaka*, *tājadbhaṅga* (or *eraṇḍa*) *āhva* (or *palāśa*), *khadira* and *śara*. In another rite one has to put some fire sticks of *bādhaka* tree in<sup>10</sup> the fire uttering AV.6.37 (KauSū.48.26). Again in KauSū.48.37 one finds a performer is instructed to put some fire sticks procured from a tree struck by thunderbolt in the fire while reciting one of the hymns from AV.7.31,34,59,108. Similarly according to KauSū.48.38 one should prepare some fire sticks from a tree that has been dried up at its top and put the same in the fire uttering AV.7.77. Another prescription is found in KauSū.49.2 where a performer is



instructed to collect some sticks from an *aśvattha* tree which has fallen down and put them in the fire while reciting AV.9.2.

The act of burying some substances in the ground is very important in the practices of blackmagic and it is quite common in many primitive people<sup>11</sup>. In context of the *Śrauta* ritual one finds a reference to the buried blackmagical substances. During the performance of Somasacrifice while the priest digs the sounding-holes (*uparavas*) he utters some formulas from which it is indicated that the priest digs out the buried blackmagical substances called *valaga* from the sacrificial place. These are believed to have been buried by the enemy of the sacrificer with an intention to practise sorcery and by digging out these substances the priest declares to make the practised *valaga* null and void (cf. TS.6.2.11.1; ŚB.3.5.4.2). In this context the word *valaga* means according to Sāyaṇa, the materials like bone, nail, hair, dust from the foot print etc. covered in a piece of torn out cloth or skin and buried in the ground for the sake of killing the enemy<sup>12</sup>.

During another such rite the performer is advised to put a little salt and 240 smooth pebbles in a skin of a dead lizard towards the west of the fire place. At the head portion of the lizard's skin he should put some poison and pack it up. By means of a *bādhaka* stick of which the top point is made downward the priest has to bring the skin with these substances forward or to the spot where he intends to bury them uttering the hymn from AV.2.12. He should fasten a knot on the skin uttering the half verse from AV.2.12.2 (c), (d). Then uttering the quarter verse from AV.2.12.4(d) he should take the skin by means of a bamboo stick. Then with the help of a ladle made of *khadira* wood he should dig a hole of an arm-deep<sup>13</sup> at the place which is thought to be the *marman* or the weak point of the enemy. While uttering the verse from AV.2.12.6 he has to keep some burning reeds inside the hole, put the skin along with these substances on



the burning reeds, arrange some clods above the skin by means of the ladle and throw some loose soil in to the hole in order to fill it up while uttering the sentence – “to N. N. I carry away” (KauSū.47.46-53).

In order to make a foe impotent it is prescribed that one should put the urine and dung of a male calf in the fore skin of its male organ and also put the testicles of the calf with these substances, crush these together into powder by means of a *bādhaka* staff. Then he should bury these in the *marman* (weak-point) of the foe. While preparing and burying he should recite the hymn AV.6.138 (KauSū.48.32). In a similar rite the practiser has to bury some substances in the following manner. He has to take a small piece of the fore-skin from the male organ of a male calf and a piece of reed, putting them inside the fore-skin of the male calf he should make powder of these and then bury the same (KauSū.48.33-34). In all these rites it is interesting to note that an instruction is given to bury the substances in the *marman*<sup>14</sup> or weak point of the enemy. The word appears to mean a sacred place or spot suitable for the practise of blackmagic where the practised sorcery is believed to be effective without fail.

Another important type of blackmagical rites prevalent among the primitive people is to perform the rite by means of an image of the enemy made of wax, clay or some other substances<sup>15</sup>. Sometimes a picture of the foe drawn on the dusts, sands or on the ground or by means of any other material is used as the substitute of the enemy. Some such rites are described in the KauSū., where the performer is instructed to make the image of the foe and to inflict various harms on the same. Thus according to KauSū.47.54, the performer should make an image of the enemy and shoot an arrow at its heart. The bow of the arrow is said to be equipped with the fibre made of hemp. That arrow should be provided with the feathers of an owl and its shaft should be made of a black ‘*ala*’ wood with a thorn fixed at the point (KauSū.49.35.28). While shooting at the image the performer



has to recite AV.2.12. An option is provided in the text with regard to the image of the enemy that the rite can be performed on the shadow of the enemy<sup>16</sup>. In another rite the performer has to fix an image of the enemy on a wooden pillar and put the pillar in between the fire-sticks and a hole inside the offering place<sup>17</sup>. Every day he has to pour down on it the remnants of the *ingīḍa* oil after offering the oil in the fire. Like this he has to pour down for twelve days and while pouring down he should utter AV.16.6-9. On the thirteenth day he should strike 'water thunderbolt' at it uttering AV.13.3.6 and after that he is instructed to suck water by his hand uttering AV.13.3.7 (KauSū.49.23-25). This 'water thunderbolt' (*udavajra*) is nothing but throwing of handfuls of water duely charmed with magical formulas. The image in these rites is believed to represent the enemy himself. Whatever hurtful action done on the image is thought to affect the enemy in the same hurtful manner. This is a clear example of imitative magic based on the homeopathic principle of magic<sup>18</sup>.

Primitive people believe that the objects which happen to come in contact with any being or anything even for once become inseparable part of those beings or things though outwardly separated later on through time and space. This doctrine is a part of the theory of contagious magic<sup>19</sup>. Therefore the magicians make use of such objects in some magical rites with the notion that the action done on these objects will affect the original being or thing of which the objects at their hand were forming the parts or simply had come in contact with the same once upon a time. Among such objects the most noteworthy one is the dust taken from the foot prints of any person, i.e. the enemy and it is used widely in the magical rites of offensive nature. One finds some rites in the KauSū. in which dusts of the foot print of enemy is prescribed to be used in order to practise blackmagic against him. Thus in KauSū.47.25-29 it is prescribed that



when one's enemy is running towards the southern direction the performer should tear down one of the foot prints of the enemy by means of an axe uttering the hymn from AV.2.12. He should tear the foot print three times vertically, three times horizontally and two times crosswise. Thus in all he has to tear the same for eight times. Then he should take dust from that foot print, put it in a leaf of *bādhaka* tree and make a packet, then he should put the same on a frying pan. If the dust being heated in the frying pan crackles then it is to be known that the enemy is dead. This rite appears to be a rite of divination through which one becomes sure about the death of his enemy<sup>20</sup>. A similar abhicāra rite prescribed in KauSū.48.11 is to be performed against a thief who has stolen the cows of the performer. After taking the cow when the thief runs away one should perform the rite as mentioned above with the help of the dust from the foot print of the thief and use the hymn AV.5.17. Still in another rite the performer takes the dust from the foot prints of the thief by means of a leaf and makes a packet and he should scatter the same over the excrement of a cow while reciting the hymns from AV.5.18 and 19. Or one may scatter the same dust on a cremation ground uttering 'kill N. N.', for three times (KauSū.48.14-18).

In some abhicāra rites the performers make use of some living beings and these living beings serve their purpose in different ways.

1. They are considered to be the representatives of the enemies caught in the hands of the performer who kills or tortures them so that the poor creatures meet death and the enemies whom such creatures represent are also believed to meet the same fate.
2. Sometimes these are used as mediums of transference of curses, diseases or any other blackmagical effects from the performer or any other person.



3. At times these become tools in the hands of the performers to be used for terrifying or annoying the enemies.

Thus, in a rite a performer has to kill a redheaded-lizard while uttering the words 'I kill N. N.', In the same day he has to put this dead lizard on a coach of hemp. The same is to be smeared with blood and enveloped with black cloths. Afterwards the performer should burn it in the fire uttering the hymn from AV.2.12 (KauSū.47.39-40). In KauSū.47.42 another rite is prescribed according to which the performer, after killing a lizard in the same manner offers its limbs one by one entirely,<sup>21</sup> (instead of offering cut portions from each one of the limbs) and at the time of offering he should utter AV.2.12. The performer of another abhicāra rite is instructed to tie up a green-striped-frog along with its feet by means of a blue-red thread and put it in the hot water. Then he should offer *iṅgiḍa* oil in the fire reciting AV.7.95. After each offering he should push away the frog and not allow to come out of the water (KauSū.48.40). In these three rites the living beings like lizards or frogs are used for the sake of the performance of blackmagic and are thought to be the representatives of the foes whom the performer wants to torture and kill.

In order to destroy the enemy who is supposed to have cursed him the performer should give a lump of white clay to a dog reciting the hymn from AV.6.37 (KauSū.48.23). According to KauSū.49.1 the performer of another abhicāra rite should pour out the remnants of *iṅgiḍa* oil (after offering the same in the fire) on a bull while uttering the hymn from AV.9.2 and let the bull run towards the enemy. Here the intention of the performer seems to cause terror in the mind of the enemy.

One finds the use of noose in some blackmagical rites



with the hope that the performer can bind the enemy with the noose which he has used. In one such rites the performer is advised to prepare as many nooses as one has foes, besmear these with *ingīḍa* oil and sprinkle on these the remnants of the same oil after offering in the fire. While preparing and smearing he should utter the hymn from AV.3.6. He furnishes these with cords and puts these inside a coffin. Then he has to bury the coffin in a hole dug in the spot believed to be the weak point of the enemy (KauSū.48.4). While performing another abhicāra rite, after making the nooses in the same manner the performer should put them in a boat and push away the boat in water by means of an *aśvattha* branch uttering AV.3.6.8 or 9.4.2. Then he should make the water flow over the nooses, i.e. he should push the boat down the water so that the nooses sink below the water. At that time he has to utter AV.3.6.7 (KauSū.48.5-6). According to another prescription in KauSū.49.19, the performer should put in the fire some pegs furnished with nooses in the same manner as the fire sticks are put on the fire. While putting the pegs in fire he utters verse from AV.13.1.28 and the hymns from AV.13.3 and 16.6. At the time of reciting the verses he should cut some nooses at the end of each quarter verse. Then he has to crush them along with the pegs of *bādhaka* wood in to powder. He packs these powder up and puts these in a frying pan while uttering AV.13.1.28 or AV.13.3 or AV.16.6 (KauSū.49.20-21).

Use of food forms the main characteristic in some other abhicāra rites. There are instructions to prepare food in a particular way and to give the same to the foe. The practiser of an abhicāra rite is advised to drink first a liquid prepared by putting some flour of unhusked barley grains in hot water. After putting the same in hot water he should not churn the water and while drinking the liquid he should not take breath in between. In this way he should drink such liquids for twelve days. There is an instruction to put three handfuls of flour in hot water for the first three days, two handfuls of



flour for the next three days and one handful of flour for the remaining six days. Then at the end of the twelfth night or the dawn of the thirteenth day he should prepare cooked rice with milk and give the same to his foe after charming the food with the utterance of the hymn from AV.2.12. When the foe finishes his eating the practiser should take the remnants of food from the plate and mix the same with the food which has not been served but kept in the vessel. Then he should throw all these food in a water-place, i.e. a pond or pool where there are many fishes. If one notices the fishes in the water place rushing towards the food then it is to be known that the foe is dead (KauSū.47.33-38). In this rite following points are to be noted – (1) Twelve days observances of the performer before practising the main abhicāra rite, (2) The use of remains of the food of the enemy and (3) The rite of divination through which the performer becomes sure about the death of his enemy. All these activities are believed to be magically potent and help to yield the final harmful effect. In another similar rite some rice is prepared with milk and charmed with the utterance of the hymn from AV.7.96 over it. Then one should serve some portion of the food to a hungry man and the remaining portion of food he should give to his foe to eat. When his enemy finishes his eating he should make the enemy wash his hands in an unbaked earthen pot (KauSū.48.42-43). In this rite also the remains of food plays important role but is different from the earlier one. The food remnants of a hungry man are possibly expected to make the foe suffer from hunger who subsequently eats the remnants. The unbaked or raw vessel used in the rite is also considered to be an inauspicious object since its preparation is incomplete and such defective objects are often found to be used in magical rites (cf. AV.5.31.1).

Sometimes the performer is instructed to mix some magical substances in the food and give the same to the



enemy. For example, in KauSū.47.23 it is mentioned that the performer should envelope the powder of four objects, i.e. powder of lead, foam from a river, powder of iron and powder of the head of a lizard. He has to mix all these powders in the food charmed with the recitation of AV.1.16 and make the foe eat the same food. He is also instructed to put the powders in the ornaments or ointment of the foe. It can be well imagined here that by mixing these powders in the food the performer makes the food poisonous which ultimately begs the life of the foe who eats it. Similarly mixing of the poisonous powder with any ornament or ointment is intended to cause some outward physical pain to the foe who makes use of the same in his ignorance.

The performer of another rite should prepare a delicious dish called *Bṛhaspatiśiraḥ* (this food is mentioned in AV.11.3) while reciting AV.5.3, sprinkle on it the clotted butter (*prṣātaka*), recite the same hymn on it and put the dish near the foe. When the foe looks at the dish the performer should recite the verses from AV.11.3.50-56 (KauSū.49.15,17). It is hoped that enemy will be ruined thereby.

Stones are used in some abhicāra rites either to be thrown away or to be concealed somewhere so that such actions would affect the adverseries of the performer badly and magically. Thus in order to destroy an enemy the performer has to take a stone from the bed of a river which does not have any name and throw it towards the southern direction uttering AV.2.12 (KauSū.47.32). In another rite the performer is instructed to conceal one stone inside some excrements uttering AV.5.19 or AV.12.5. Afterwards he should undergo some observances for twelve days with great exertions<sup>23</sup>. After the twelfth day he has to wait for further two days. Then he can be sure that his enemy is dead. After waiting for these two days he should shove out the stone from the excrements by means of a bamboo stick with its point downward (KauSū.48.19-22).



Some rites are characterized by the use of 'water thunderbolt' (*udavajra*). The word *udavajra* stands for the act of throwing handful of water towards the enemy or towards that direction where the foe is thought to be present and this action has to be accompanied with utterance of some magical formulas or recitation of any verse<sup>24</sup>. This peculiar magical activity is also noticed in the *Śrauta* ritual. At the time of taking the *avabhyṛtha* bath at the end of a somasacrifice the participants are instructed to throw handfuls of water uttering formulas towards that direction where they think that their enemy is present (cf. ĀpŚS.13.21.1; BŚS.20.19; BhŚS.7.23.2). In the KauSū. also one finds this water thunder bolt to be used for destroying enemy. It is thought to be effective only when the same is prepared correctly. Thus in KauSū.49.3-14 it is prescribed that uttering the first half verses from AV.10.5.1-6 the performer should wash the pot in which he intends to get water. With the second half verses of the same text he takes water in the pot. Uttering the formula – 'thou art the source of the wind... etc.' (mentioned in KauSū.49.5) he fills the pot completely with water from the surface of a water reservoir. Then he should pour down half of the water from that pot into another pot and heat the second pot on the fire uttering AV.10.5.7-14. The other half of water remaining in the first pot should be given to someone. Then he pours out some of the hot water with the formula 'drive him... etc.' (mentioned in KauSū.49.6). Again he should utter the formula mentioned in KauSū.49.7-9 and announce to afflict the foes from various quarters with different harms and uttering the formula given in KauSū.49.12 he declares the assurance of security to some creatures and objects of this universe. Then he should throw the water taking it in his folded hands and uttering the verse from AV.10.5.15-21 and AV.10.5.42-50. After throwing the water thunderbolt he should stride the *viṣṇukramas* facing towards the same direction where he thinks that the enemy is present.



In another such rite the performer has to undergo certain austerities before hurling the water thunderbolt. He has to sleep behind the fire-place in a ditch spreading some jujube-fruits inside the ditch. He has to sleep there for twelve nights without changing his sides. After twelve days he has to rise up from that ditch and throw the water thunderbolt towards the southern direction for three times, i.e. at morning, midday and evening while uttering AV.2.12

(KauSū.47.30-31).

Atharvanic tradition has preserved some rituals which are to be performed in connection with women known as '*strīkarmāṇi*'. Some of such rituals are of the nature of blackmagic, i.e. causing harm and discomfort. These are performed in order to bring ill-luck to a woman, to make a woman sterile, to cause hatred between lovers and beloved ones etc.

In order to bring ill-luck to a woman (*daurbhāgya karaṇam*) a performer should bring a garland which has been used by the woman concerned, he has also to procure a *pramanda* (a fragrant plant), tooth pick and hair belonging to the same woman. He should also procure a piece of skin of a cow which has been killed by *īśāna*, i.e. which died on account of fever or a cow that has been killed in a funeral ceremony. All the above substances he has to bury in a hole used as a mortar under three stones uttering the hymn from AV.1.14 (KauSū.36.15). It is prescribed in KauSū.36.16 that a performer should crush a garland belonging to the woman on whom he intends to bring misfortune and while doing so he should utter AV.1.14. For the same purpose one finds another instruction that the performer should intertwine three curled hairs under three stones one by one (KauSū.36.17). In all these rites it is noticed that some objects or materials used by the woman against whom these rites are going to be performed are cleverly procured and used with the underlying belief that the things once come in contact use to remain in contact forever even when apparently they are separated.



Another performer is advised to touch the heart and face of a woman while uttering AV.7.114 so that he can bring blackmagical effect on her (KauSū.36.39).

If one wants to make a woman sterile (*vandhyākaraṇa*) one should procure the urine of a she-mule and two rounded stones. By means of the urine he should rub these stones and prepare a liquid. Then he has to mix that liquid carefully with the food and ornament to be used by that woman. At the time of preparing the liquid the performer is advised to utter the hymn from AV.7.35. In order to prevent a woman from giving birth to a male child one should perform the above rite but utter the hymn from AV.7.34 (KauSū.36.33). In another rite meant for the same purpose, i.e. to make a woman sterile, the practiser should look at the hair-parting of that woman while uttering AV.7.35. In this rite the hair parting of a woman seems to have some connection with the child in the womb of the mother. This point is also indicated in a domestic rite called '*simantonayana*', in which, in order to bring safety to the child in the womb of the mother the hairs of the mother are to be parted upwards (cf. ĀśvGS.1.14.1 and ĀpaGS.14.1). Gazing at the hair-parting of the mother is thought to be similar to the gazing at the womb of the mother.

Sexual jealousy is one of the causes for the practise of sorcery in the primitive societies<sup>25</sup>. In a polygamous family the wives want to bring hatred between their husband and their co-wives. Sometimes the husband also tries to bring hatred between his wife and her paramour if she has any. Thus in the KauSū. one finds certain rites prescribed to be performed by both men and women in order to get rid of their rivals. If one wants to cause any hatred between a lover and the beloved then one should mingle the powder of the leaves called *bāṇāparṇī* (plant) with the curd prepared from the milk of a red-she-goat, reciting the hymn from AV.7.113. Then the prepared liquid is to be sprinkled on the bed of the lover and beloved (KauSū.36.38). If a woman wants to cause



hatred between her husband and any of her co-wives then she should perform the same rite with the utterance of the hymn from AV.3.18 (KauSū.36.19).

If the husband of a woman wants to destroy the paramour of his wife (*jāroccāṭana*) then he has to perform one of the following rites. He should utter the hymn from AV.7.90 at the paramour of his wife according to KauSū.36.35. Then he has to smash a bow of *bādhaka* wood on the foot print of an eneuch uttering the same hymn (KauSū.36.36). Or he should throw a stone towards the place where the paramour and the wife use to cohabit and at that time he should utter the hymn AV.7.90 (KauSū.36.37). The second rite which is to be performed on the foot print of an eneuch seems to serve the purpose of making the paramour an eneuch which agrees with the subject matter of the hymn recited during the performance of the rite. The third rite which is to be performed in the place of conjugation of the paramour and wife is apparently believed to bring blackmagical effect on the paramour through the place which comes in contact with the paramour.

One finds in KauSū. some rituals prescribed to be performed by a king in order to destroy his enemy and his army in the battle and the hymns from the AV. known by the designation *sāṅgrāmikāṇi* are used in such rituals. The *purohita* (chaplain) of the king performs these rites on behalf of the king in order to secure victory over his rival army. Since these rites are magical type and meant for harming the rivals these are very well understood to be of blackmagical nature. Thus in order to destroy the rival army the royal chaplain should put some special firesticks in the fire kindled in the forest and at that time he has to recite the hymn from AV.8.8 (KauSū.16.14). These fire sticks are to be prepared out of those trees which are called rivalannihilating (*sapatna-kṣayaṇi*).

In order to make confusion (*mohana karma*) among rival



fighters the magician priest of a king should perform an offering rite in which the oblations of the husks of grains are made in the fire. He should make the husks attached to the balls made of cooked rice and offer them in the fire by means of a mortar while uttering AV.3.1 and 2 (KauSū.14.18). In the same way he has to offer the small particles of rice grains in the fire uttering the same hymns (KauSū.14.19). The performer of another rite has to offer cooked rice to the deity called *apvā* (cf. AV.3.2.5) while uttering the hymn AV.3.1 or 3.2 for the same purpose (KauSū.14.21). In the hymn from AV.3.2, this goddess is considered to be the deity of evil or sin who is requested to do various harms to the rival-fighters. Still another rite is to be performed for the same purpose which is prescribed in KauSū.14.20 and in which the performer has to winnow out twenty-one gravels facing towards the rival army and uttering the hymns AV.3.1 and 2.

It is prescribed in KauSū.14.22 and 23 that the magician priest of a king should perform a rite in order to create disturbance among the rival fighters (*udvegakarāṇa*) just before the beginning of the battle. He should bring a white-footed-she-goat, besmear it with the remnants of the offering butter while uttering AV.3.19. Then he should let the charmed goat run towards the rival army. After sending the goat he should wait till the rival army becomes disturbed and then only he should indicate the army to which he belongs to attack or start fighting with the rivals. This rite is quite similar to another rite prescribed in KauSū.49.1 in which a bull is made to run towards the enemy in the same way.

Sometimes the chaplain of a king takes responsibility to perform rituals in order to cause terror among the opponent fighters so that they would be defeated easily or flee away from the battle field. According to KauSū.16.1 the performer should wash all the percussion-instruments,



rub on them the powders of *uśīra* and *tagara* (two fragrant plants), besmear these instruments with the remnants of the offering ghee, beat them thrice each and handover these to the instrument players. While doing each of these activities he has to recite the hymns from AV.5.20 and 6.126. In another rite the performer is instructed to offer oblations in the fire while reciting AV.5.21 in a loud voice and after having offered he should revolve the offering ladle in the air (KauSū.16.2). Again the magician priest of a king has to prepare an amulet of soma-stalks, stitches it with a hide of a deer and making it charmed with the utterance of AV.5.21, binds it on the neck of the king while uttering the same hymn (KauSū.16.3). These rites are of the nature of blackmagic since these are meant for terrifying the opponent army and designated as *trāsana karmāṇi* or simply *trāsanaṇi*.

One section of the KauSū. (Kaṇḍikā-39) is entirely devoted to a *pratyabhicāra* rite or counter sorcery. In the text the rite is known as *kṛtyāpratiharāṇa-karma*, i.e. the counter action of *kṛtyā*. The term *kṛtyā* stands for the personified blackmagic. It can be produced and practised with the help of many objects (cf. AV.5.31). The counter action of *kṛtyā* in the KauSū. is to be performed in the place where the enemy is believed to have left the practised *kṛtyā*. Moreover, in this rite *kṛtyā* appears in the form of a puppet or an image made of some substance<sup>26</sup>. Some of the prescribed rites in this section of the text are connected with different limbs of *kṛtyā*. Unless one understands *kṛtyā* here something like a puppet or image made and sent by a practiser it would be very difficult to interpret these prescriptions and it would also be difficult to put these prescriptions into the actual practice.

Before the proper description of this rite of counter action of sorcery one should have a view on some prescriptions regarding the primary practices. The person who wants to protect himself from the *kṛtyā* practised against him by his enemy and counter act the same should



make an amulet of *srakti* (*srāktya*), i.e. *tilaka*-wood and bind it on his body with the recitations of the hymn AV.2.11 (KauSū.39.1). Then towards the eastern side of the fire place, the performer or the magician priest should kill a red-brown bull and towards the western side of the fire a redgoat. The gravy and flesh of these animals are to be used in the rite at a proper occasion afterwards (cf. KauSū.39.14). He has to prepare the holy water (*śāntiyudaka*) with the help of some herbs namely *vāśā*, *kāmpīla*, *siṭvāra*, *sadampuṣpā*. Putting these in the pot he has to recite the hymns from AV.2.11, 4.17, 18, 19, 40, 5.14, 31, 8.5 and 10.1 while preparing the holy water (KauSū.39.2-7). These are the preliminary rites to be performed before the ritual of the counter action of *kṛtyā*.

Then at the night the magician priest puts off his shoes, puts a turban on his head, goes forward to that ground where the *kṛtyā* is supposed to be left. While going he sprinkles the holy water which he prepared earlier and utters the formula "*yatāyai...* etc." (KauSū.39.8-9). After having searched for *kṛtyā* properly on that ground if he does not find it then he is advised to throw away all the requisites he has brought (KauSū.39.10). But, if he finds the same then he should seize the *kṛtyā* with his terrible gaze (with his angry-looks) and shoot in its besmeared part (of the body) an arrow reciting the verse from AV.5.14.9 (KauSū.39.11-12). Afterwards he has to sprinkle some liquid around the ankles of *kṛtyā*. This liquid is in the form of churned curd in which no water is to be mixed and which is to be prepared out of the milk of a cow having a calf of her own colour. He sprinkles the same by means of a *darvī* (a spoon made of *udumbara* wood) and with the utterance of the verse from AV.2.11.1 (KauSū.39.13). By means of a wooden chip he sprinkles *kṛtyā* with holy water, makes the *kṛtyā* eat the gravy and flesh which he has prepared previously (KauSū.39.14). After having spread a hide on the ground which he brought along with him he fastens the hide with some sticks. Then he asks the *praiṣakṛt* or another person appointed to help him to walk around the



*kṛtyā* and to unfasten the same from its earlier bindings by means of pliers (KauSū.39.15). He himself lays the unfastened *kṛtyā* down on the hide with its backside upwards, sprinkles on it the holy water by means of the wooden chip and again makes it eat the gravy and flesh (KauSū.39.16-17). With the utterance of AV.10.1.25 he anoints the eyes of *kṛtyā*, dresses it up, binds it by means of a rope made of *darbha* grass and raises it from the ground while uttering a quarter verse from AV.10.1.20(c) (KauSū.39.18-19). In his left hand the performer takes the lamp and in his right hand he takes the water pot made of dry cucumber (*alābu*) filled with water. Then the *praiśakṛt* holding the *kṛtya* walks in front, both of them restrain their speech and proceed towards the south western direction. They should stop near a place where there would be no foot-print of any cattle, there should not be water stored in small holes on the ground. The ground must be inclined towards the south or it must have splits or having some natural hollows or that must be inside the boundary of another person (possibly of the enemy). After finding such a place they should stop there and put down the *kṛtyā* (KauSū.39.20-25). There, the performer extinguishes the lamp by means of the water taken from the cucumber-pot. Then they should return immediately back to the village reciting the verse from AV.10.1.32 (KauSū.39.26). The practiser is instructed to stand up straight and recite the formula called *mahāśānti* <sup>27</sup> in a laud voice on the person for whom the counter-action of *kṛtyā* is being performed (KauSū.39.27). He sprinkles the holy water in the weak-point or the vital points called *marman* (KauSū.39.28). Then he should plough the ground wherefrom the *kṛtyā* was found or left by the enemy and the plough used for this purpose should be yoked with black-oxen (KauSū.39.29). Lastly the householder should give the magician priest gifts (*dakṣiṇā*) which consists of ten cows along with the two oxen yoked to the plough (KauSū.39.30). It may be remarked that the various requisites, places and time prescribed for the performances of the counter action of *kṛtyā* are believed to be magically potent.



The treatment of *kṛtyā* as a living being is also worthy to be noted.

Apart from the above *abhicāra* and *pratyabhicāra* rites there are some miscellaneous type of blackmagical rituals found in the same text. In one of such rites the performer has to take an armed long decayed bamboo stick, besmear it with blood and poison and charm it with the utterance of the hymn from AV.1.16. Then he has to strike his foe with this stick (KauSū.47.24). In another rite the performer has to dash a mushroom in to pieces while uttering the hymn AV.5.13 (KauSū.48.10). This act of smashing the mushroom symbolises the smashing of the foe with one's own hands. In KauSū.47.56 one rite is prescribed in which the performer has to pour out water charmed with the utterance of the hymn AV.2.12 near the enemy. While the enemy is coming towards him the performer should look at him while uttering the verse from AV.7.13.2 in order to destroy him (KauSū.48.36). The action of looking in the magical rites is considered to be as effective as touching which enhances the effect of the destructive action<sup>28</sup>. The act of looking is closely connected with the magically potent formulas. That is why the term '*caṣurmantra*' or eye-conjurer occurs in AV.2.7.5 and this suggests that the effects which are usually brought by incantations can be achieved through the eye-glances also.<sup>29</sup>

A rite supplementary to these *abhicāra* rites prescribed in KauSū.49.27 is to take purificatory bath. The performer should rub and wash his entire body with water uttering the hymn AV.16.2. The purpose of this rite is to remove sins produced by these evil practices. It is quite similar to the rite of *avabhṛtha* performed at the end of a soma-sacrifice.

## Conclusion

The *abhicāra* rites in the *Kauśika Sūtra* are of domestic



type which can be performed by the individuals who have not established the sacred *Śrauta* fires. This shows the popularity of these blackmagical performances in general. Of course it must be kept in mind that there might have been many others who were not authorized to perform even the domestic rites but might be performing some sort of blackmagic. It seems, the Vedic texts have adopted only some of the popular blackmagical rituals and given them a sanctified form and established them in the framework of the sacred Vedic rituals. The *dīksā* ceremony and some other observances which the performer has to go before performing the *grhyaritual* (see KauSū.47.33-36, 47.30 and 48.20) are worthy to be noted from this point of view. There are blackmagical rites for the common householders as well as for kings and women also. Another noteworthy point on the feature of some of these rites is that they include some divinational rituals as well (cf. KauSū.47.29 and 48.21). Thus the performer can know with the help of such divination rites whether the rival is dead or not. The prescription on purificatory bath at the end of abhicāra rites signifies the following points. On one hand this indicates an artificial similarity of these rituals with the most sacred soma-sacrifices in the *Śrauta* ritual which includes a similar bath called *avabhyṛta* and on the other hand an anxiety on the part of the performers to become purified from the sin, possibly, supposed to be incurred due to their involvement in these blackmagical rites.

With regard to various objects or materials used in these rites, one observes that there is a considerable similarity between *Śrauta-abhicāra*-rites and *grhya-abhicāra*-rites. Therefore, it can be possible to conjecture that the *Śrauta* as well as the *grhya*-abhicāra-rituals might have been originally a part of some popular rituals and that the blackmagic one finds in the Vedic texts is just a small portion of the general blackmagical ritual prevalent during the pre Vedic as well as the Vedic period.



## References

1. For the *gr̥hyasātras* dealing with blackmagical rites see Apte V. M., *Social and Religious Life in the Gr̥hya Sūtras*, Pp.75-76.
2. cf. Gonda, *Vedic Ritual*, p.250.
3. cf. Gonda, *Vedic Ritual*, p.250.
4. For the grass cut at both the sides used in blackmagical rites see AB.3.22 and ŚSS.1.6.6, also cf. Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p.158, f.n. 2.
5. According to TB.1.6.8.7 in the rites for gods the roots of the grasses are to be cut but in the rites for manes one should not cut the roots at all, cf. KauSū.1.23 and Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p.158, f.n. 2.
6. The rites named after Āṅgiras are called *āṅgīrasa* and these are of the nature of abhicāra, cf. Karambelkar, 'Āṅgīrasa Kalpa and Pratyāṅgīrā Kalpa', PAIOC, 13th session, 1952, pt. II, p.62.
7. cf. Keśava's Paddhati on KauSū.7.10.
8. Left hand is to be used in blackmagical rites : see AV Pariśiṣṭa.28.2.2-3 and 31.9.3. For the inauspiciousness of the left hand see Gonda, *Vedic Ritual*, p.60.
9. The staff for an initiated Vedic student is made of *Palāśa* wood or *nyagrodha* or *udumbara* for a brahmin or *kṣatrīya* or *vaiśya* student respectively (cf. ĀpaGS.11.16-17). For a Śrauta sacrificer the staff is to be made of *udumbara* wood (cf. ĀpŚS.10.10.4-5).
10. Here, neither the KauSū. nor Darila nor Keśava (commentators on the text) mentions any particular wood for this rite, Caland points out that the *bādhaka* wood is to be used here, cf. *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p.169.
11. Cf. Saligmann, K., *Magic, Supernaturalism and Religion*, Pp.16-17, burying of waximage is also practised in Malay, cf. *Malay Magic*, by Skeats, p.571.
12. See Sayana's commentary on TS.1.3.2.1, see also Keith's translation to TS.1.3.2.1 (*HOS* Vol. 18, p.37) f.n.2; to his tr. to ŚB.3.5.4.2 (*SBE*. Vol. 26, p.135); cf. also *Vedic Ritual*, p.324.
13. Usually the magical substances are buried in a hole dug up to one arm deep. In TS.6.2.11.1 it is said that the Asuras rivaling with the gods buried some magical substances against the vital airs (*prāṇa*) of the gods and the gods could find out these substances from an arm deep hole.
14. The meaning of the word *marman* is 'a vulnerable point', 'any



- exposed part of the body' or 'the vital organ', cf. **Stutley**, *Ancient Indian Magic and Folklore*, p.98; in order to explain the word in its magical ritual context the KauSū.39.31 refers to AV.5.31 where some places suitable for practising *abhicāra* or *kṛtyā* are mentioned such as fields, cemetery etc.
15. Effigies made of wax for blackmagical purposes are also used in Persia, Egypt, Europe, cf. **Stutley**, *Ancient Indian Magic and Folklore*, p.98, cf. also **Frazer**, *The Golden Bough* (abr. ed.), p.12; for its use in Iran, see *Oriental Magic*, by **Shah**, p.103; in Greece and Rome, see 'Magic' by **Macculloch**, *ERE*, vol.8, p.284; among Celtic people, see *Malay Magic*, Pp.570-572, cf. also *AVParīṣiṣṭa*.31.9.4-5.
  16. Shadow can be taken as the substitute for the image of a particular person in magical performances, cf. 'Magic' (Celtic) *ERE*, vol.8, p.258.
  17. The particular spot where the pillar is to be kept is not understood clearly, cf. **Caland**, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p.173, f.n. 9.
  18. *The Golden Bough*, p.12.
  19. *The Golden Bough*, p.11.
  20. For the Vedic divination in general see **Thite G. U.** 'Vijñāna, a kind of divination-rites in the Vedic Literature', WZKS Band.XXII, 1978, Pp.5.17, also see *Vedic Ritual*, chapter XV, p.265.
  21. Here the word *sarvahūta* means offering entirely.
  22. cf. **Feng and Shryock**, 'The Blackmagic in China known as 'Ku'', p.9.
  23. The details of the observances are mentioned in KauSū.126.3-4. Thus one should go to the mid forest and stay there for nine days living on fruits, roots and leaves. Then he should take only water for three days without taking any food.
  24. For this rite cf. **Shende**, 'Foundations of Atharvanic Religion' BDCRI, 1974, p.232.
  25. cf. **Marmick M. G.** *Sorcery in its Social setting*, Pp.96-101.
  26. cf. *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p.132, f.n.1.
  27. The hymns under the section *mahāśāntigaṇa* occur in between KauSū.8.23 and 9.5. These hymns are further divided into four sections namely, *vāstopatiya mātṛnāman*, *cātana* and *mṛgāra* cf. **Keśava and Dārila**.
  28. cf. *Eye and Gaze in the Veda*, by **Gonda J.**, p.19; *Magic* by **Webster**, p.79 and for this rite cf. *Vedic Ritual*, **Gonda**, p.359.
  29. cf. *Eye and Gaze in the Veda*, by **Gonda J.**, p.19; *Magic* by **Webster**, p.79 and for this rite cf. *Vedic Ritual*, **Gonda**, p.359.



## 4

HYMNS, FORMULAS, SĀMANS AND  
OTHER UTTERANCES

Ritual performances all over the world, in general, have three main constituents, i.e. verbal utterances, manual actions and material substances. Vedic sacrificial rituals are no exception to this as all these three major elements are present in these along with some other minor elements like thought or meditation, particular place and time, knowledge of the performer on any particular topic etc. which are occasionally found to be included in order to enhance the effectiveness of the rituals. The most important among all these elements is the verbal rites or ritual utterances so far the Vedic sacrificial performances are concerned and this element is well known as *mantra*. The Vedic *mantra* has three main constituents : (1) Recitations of hymns and verses from the RV. and AV., (2) the utterances of prose or metrical formulas from the YV. and (3) chanting of *sāmans* from the SV. The *saṁhitā* portion of the Vedic texts are the source of these verbal rites. It is intended here to study these elements with special references to their use in abhicāra rites.

The importance of verbal expressions in magical rites is well known<sup>1</sup>. In ritual activities, as mentioned above, various kinds of utterances are thought to be helpful for their magical effectiveness. According to Webster, 'If there is a power in wishes, threats or commands uttered, how much greater must be the power of words which affirm or describe what the magician wants to come to pass, speech has definiteness in contrast to more or less hazy thought, it wings its way to its destination, it carries the wish home. The



magician's verbal reference to a desired result becomes for him an instrument producing it. Oral rites of magic thus stand on the same ground as manual rites.<sup>2</sup> In the Vedic ritual, as it is blended with magical rites, the utterances bear the same importance.<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of blackmagic in the Vedic ritual some vocal expressions are used and before going to discuss them it will be better to quote some Vedic texts where through vocal expressions the harms are expected to be brought to the enemy.

The mystic power of hymns which very often are called *Brahman*<sup>4</sup> is sometimes found to be employed against enemies. The practiser intends to do harm by means of *Brahman* power ('spell', 'mighty incantation') to the *Gandharvas* who take various shapes like dogs and apes and use to fasten upon women (AV.4.37.11). Another performer wishes to cut off the seven breathes, eight marrows of a *Brahman*-hater by means of his *Brahman* (incantation) (AV.2.12.7). A rival expects to shut up the portion (*vulva*) of an unmarried girl by means of the incantation attributed to the seers namely Asita, Kaśyapa and Gaya (AV.1.14.4). The priest of a king intends to destroy the enemies of his patron in the battle field by his *Brahman* (AV.3.19.3). This mighty incantation is said to be 'sharpened' like a weapon made of metal, while it is employed against enemies (AV.3.19.1). It is also treated as an instrument for sharpening other instruments or weapons which are to be used against enemies<sup>5</sup>. (RV.6.75.16= AV.3.19.8). It sharpens the wardrums (AV. 5.20.10) and considered as an inner defence of a performer of a battle rite (AV.1.19.4). From these descriptions given in the Vedic texts one can very well imagine the blackmagical powers attributed to the Vedic incantations.

### (A) Hymns and Verses

Many hymns and verses are taken from the texts of RV. and AV. for the purpose of recitations inside the sacrificial performances. While going through such hymns



and verses in the above *Saṁhitās* one observes that these are believed to have some blackmagical or harmful power in themselves. Moreover, the later texts like *Brāhmaṇas*, *Śrauta Sūtras* and *Gṛhya Sūtras* prescribe certain hymns and verses to be recited during various sacrificial rites which aim at bringing unfavourable results to the enemies. Sometimes such prescriptions occur irrespective of the contents of the particular hymns or verses.

In the RV one finds some hymns containing malevolent thought against the enemies of the composers of the text. 'Let him who hates us fall head long down ward, him whom we hate, let vital breath abandon', this, one reads in RV.3.53.21. Similarly, 'O Indra, like a caldron cracked and seething, so he pours out foam' is found in RV.3.53.22. This is an indication of death and torture of an enemy who hates the seer and whom the seer also hates. As the tradition accepts Viśvamitra as the seer of this hymn and the age long rivalry between Viśvamitra and Vasiṣṭha is well known, the verses from RV.3.53.21-24 are traditionally considered to be hostile to Vasiṣṭha's followers. They always avoid to listen the recitation of these verses.<sup>6</sup>

The well known hymn from the RV. called 'Sūrya's bridal' contains some germs of sorcery. One fiend or rather the personified sorcery called *kṛtyā* is mentioned in this hymn (RV.10.85.28-30). As the name itself suggests *kṛtyā* is 'to be made' and sent by somebody against his enemy<sup>7</sup>. Its contact and presence in the vicinity is believed to be harmful to the individuals against whom it is made and sent forth. Here '*kṛtyā*' is thought to be attached to the woollen-robe of the bride and it is also believed that it is going to attack the husband. Its colour is described to be blue and red, she has feet and she attends the bridegroom as a wife attends her husband. Therefore, the bride is advised in this hymn to give up her woollen garment so that she will be safe and make her husband free from the bad effects of blackmagic.

Another hymn, i.e. RV.10.166 is designated as



*sapatnanāśanam* or the destruction of rival. The entire hymn expresses a serious desire and declaration of the seer to conquer and slay his enemies, to vanquish them under his feet, to bind them fast etc. Just as a magician he declares that he has mastered the thought, vow and holy work of his enemies (st. 4), he has trodden on their heads with his feet and compelled them to speak him from beneath the feet (st. 5). These verses appear to be magical formulas uttered by a magician while performing sorcery.

Certain hymns from RV. are prescribed for recitation in some rites intended for the destruction of one's enemies. 'Manyu' the personified anger is invoked in two hymns, RV.10.83 and 84 (cf. AV.4.32 and 31). The subject matter seems to be battle charm. According to KauSū.14.26-27, the hymns in AV.4.31 and 32 come under the section called *aparājita* or 'unconquered' (cf. also AVPariśiṣṭa.32.13). Manyu is invoked to conquer and help the invoker to conquer a rival army consisting of the men from the *Ārya* as well as the *Dāsa* groups. Both of these hymns can also be recited in the midday pressing of four one-day soma-sacrifices of the sorcery type. In the sacrifices namely *ajira* and *udbhid*, RV.10.83 is to be used and in the sacrifices called *Śyena* and *balabhid* the hymn from RV.10.84 is to be used according to ĀśvŚS.9.7.1-20.

The sage *Apratiratha*, the son of Indra is the seer of RV.10.103. He is said to have recited this hymn in order to get victory while he was fighting in a battle (BD.8.13). In this hymn Indra is invoked by warriors to help them in battles and he is prayed to overthrow at once a hundred hosts (st.1). The warriors describe Brhaspati as a slayer of Raksases and request him to defend their chariots (st. 4). The evil goddess *apvā* is requested to bewilder the mind of the foes, seize their limbs, burn their hearts with sorrow etc. (st.12). *Apvā* presides over sin or evil<sup>8</sup>. An offering is made to her as a part of battle rite in order to bring confusion in the rival army (KauSū.14.21). According to ĀśvGS. 3.12.13, in a ritualistic preparation for war this hymn along with RV.10.152 and the



*sauparna* text<sup>9</sup> is to be muttered by the domestic priest looking at the king. Again this hymn is prescribed to be recited in the fire building rite by the Brahman priest being ordered by the Adhvaryu priest while another priest namely Prātīprasthātṛ lifts up and sets forth an *udumbara*-log. The significance of this muttering is that it enables the sacrificer to chase away the Asuras and mischievous fiends in the south (ŚB.9.2.3.5).

Women could make use of some hymns in harmful rituals against their rival women. One such hymn is RV.10.145, the subject matter is *sapatnībādhana* or getting rid of a rival wife. The female seer of the hymn is Indrāṇī<sup>10</sup> who wishes to get rid of her cowives and prepares a medicinal charm with the help of a creeper or plant called *pāṭhā* (according to Sayana). Indrāṇī hesitates to utter the name of her rival (st. 4). She instructs the plant to blow away her rival wife and to make her husband of her alone (st. 2). In ĀpaGSū.3.9.6-8 this hymn is prescribed to be used in a rite to make the husband of a woman subject to her and to overcome her cowives<sup>11</sup>. Another hymn gives a description of the desire of Śacīpaulomī to get victory over her cowives (RV.10.159). She intends to cut off their brilliance and wealth (st. 5). According to ApGS.3.9.9 a wife who wants to subdue her cowives should worship the Sun with this hymn<sup>12</sup>.

There was a general belief among ancient people that the demons and evil spirits were always associated with blackmagic. Not only they were supposed to practise sorcery against human beings but they are also believed to become agents or employees of sorcerers who execute their hostile activities with the help of these evil beings<sup>13</sup>. This belief finds expression in the RV. In some hymns there are descriptions of Raksases, Piśacas, Asuras etc. Various deities are invoked to ward off these evil creatures. Sometimes the seer himself declares to destroy them with or without any help from any deity. Thus in RV.1.133 Indra is addressed and requested to



destroy various she-fiends. These female spirits are called *yātumatī* or sorceresses (st.2-3). *Yātu*, according to Sāyaṇa, means Raksas and the word *Yātumatī* signifies 'a female-possessor of Raksases'. Agni the killer of Raksases is invoked in the hymn RV.10.87 for the purpose of destroying various evil beings. This hymn gives a long description of the nature and activities of *yātudhānas*, *Raksases* and *kimīdins*.

Two hymns from the RV. are found to be designated as *rakṣoḥaṇa* or 'killer of demons'. These are RV.7.104 which is identical with AV.8.4 and RV.10.162, designated by BD.6.28 and 8.65 respectively. The former hymn contains the imprecation directed against demons and evil spirits. It gives a description of the characteristics of several evil creatures like *Raksas*, *Atrin*, *kimīdin*, *yātudhāna*, *yātumat*, *yātu* and various forms of *yātu* such as *ulūkayātu*, *śuśulūkayātu*, *śvayātu*, *kokayātu* etc. Indra and Soma are requested to destroy them. Sometimes it is also found that these evil beings plot against human beings and become instruments in the hands of evil practisers or sorcerers. Thus in the 23rd stanza one reads – 'Let not the fiend of sorcerers reach us-...' (*rakṣo... yātumāvatām*). In the stanzas 8 and 12-16, the seer of this hymn Vasiṣṭha appears to be refusing the charges against him that he is a *yātudhāna* or demon who practises sorcery. In the 15th stanza he says – So may I die if I have harassed any man's life or if I be a demon, yea may he lose all his ten sons together who with false tongue has called me *yātudhāna*. In the later hymn (RV.10.162) Agni—the demon killer is the deity. It describes the evil activities of the Raksases who attack women, destroy their embryo by causing diseases and rest at their womb.

All these descriptions of evil beings throw light on the belief and practise of sorcery at the time of the compilation of the RV. There cannot be a clear cut distinction between demons and sorcerers. According to Griswold – "there was a close connection between demons and sorcerers. They were



hand in glove with each other. The demon was apparently thought of as entering the sorcerer as a familiar spirit and the sorcerer used the demon for his purposes. Hence, in some passages there is little or no distinction between the demon who dwells in the sorcerer and the sorcerer who is indwelt by the demon."<sup>14</sup>

Certain groups of verses from the RV., inspite of their apparently harmless character are found to be used for the purpose of recitation in the Śrauta ritual by the texts like AB. And KB. And these texts while giving the details of their use mention that the recitation of hymns and verses are effective from the point of view of blackmagic. Thus in the āponaptrīya rite of the Soma-sacrifice the hymn RV.10.30 is to be recited according to KB. 12.2 in order to make the sacrificer to push away his rival from these worlds. This hymn gives a description of fetching sacred waters required for the preparation of soma-juice and has no connection with removal of enemies. But to justify the blackmagical character of this hymn KB.12.2 mystically identifies it with a threefold thunderbolt because three forms of a thunderbolt are found in it. (1) It contains the word 'waters' (āpah) which is supposed to be identical with thunderbolt, (2) It contains the word *sarasvatī* which is also a form of thunderbolt and (3) the hymn itself is identical with thunderbolt. Similarly, in the morning pressing of a soma-sacrifice when the *Maitrāvaruṇa* priest circumambulates the oblations with fire, the priests who belong to the Hotr's group start reciting. For this recitation KB.28.2 prescribes three stanzas from RV.4.15.1-3. These verses do not appear to contain any reference to the destructions of evil beings, yet they are prescribed to be recited in order to eradicate Asuras and Raksases (evil-beings) from the sacrifice. One finds in AB.6.32 that the *Indragāthā* verses (RVKhila. 5.14 = AV. 20.128.12-16 coming under *Kuntāpa* hymns) are prescribed to be recited as a part of the *śilpasastra* of *Brāhmaṇāchamaṣin* at the time of third pressing in the sixth day of *prathvasadaha*. The reason



given in AB.6.32 is that these five verses are used so that the sacrificer can overpower his rivals. In the same context some other verses are also prescribed in order to bring the same result. These verses are *prabāhikā* or riddle verses (RVKhila.5.16= AV.20.133.1-6), *pratirādha* verses (RVKhila.5.18=AV.20.135.1-3), *ativāda* verses (RVKhila.5.19=AV.20.135.4) and *bhūtechad* verses (RVKhila.5.21=AV.20.135.11-13) (AB.6.36). It may be added that the meaning of these verses has nothing to do with the result attached them. Thus the *Ṛgveda Samhitā*, the most sacred literary composition of mankind, as one observes, contains a number of blackmagical elements in itself and also some portion of the same is believed as well as described to be blackmagical by nature.

In this context the position of the *AVSamhitā* is well known which is considered as the handbook of the ancient Indian magicians. A lot of hymns from this text are found to be endowed with the elements of abhicāra or sorcery. These hymns sometimes aim at human enemies or rivals sometimes against demons, evil spirits and some other evil beings. At times it becomes difficult to differentiate between the human enemies from other enemies. Neither from the description of their characters nor from the nature of rituals performed against them, nor from the hymns or verses addressed to them, one can mark a clear distinction between these two types of enemies. One finds the use of various plants and amulets made of various trees or metals against rivals, demons and sorcery. Moreover many deities are invoked and requested to do harm to the enemies of the invoker or to help him in doing so against all types of enemies. In a number of hymns and verses the invoker alone, without anybody's help, dares and declares to punish, harass and destroy these enemies. Taking their subject matter into consideration the hymns of the AV. are grouped and discussed in the following lines with reference to their use in various blackmagical rites.

The invoker in certain hymns wants to practise sorcery



against his enemies and for that sake he wants the help of different deities. AV.2.12 is designated as *Bharadvāja-pravraskam* or 'Bharadvāja's hewer-off' by KauSū.47.12 which prescribes this hymn to be recited while cutting a staff in a rite of abhicāra. Bharadvāja desires in this hymn to hew off the person who reviles the incantation (st. 6) and injures his mind (st. 2-3). Throughout the hymn the deities namely *Indra*, *Ādityas*, *Vasus*, *Maruts*, *Agni*, *Dyāvā* and *Prthvī* and *Āngīrases* are requested to help him in doing harm to his enemy. In preparatory ceremony of abhicāra rites while introductory offerings (*purastāddhomāḥ*) are to be offered one has to utter AV.2.19-23 according to KauSū.47.8. These five hymns are addressed to *Agni*, *Vāyu*, *Sūrya*, *Candra* and *Āpaḥ* serially and each one of these deities is requested to become hot, rage gleam and to make those persons who hate the invokers and whom the invokers hate 'unbrilliant'.

For the same purpose, it is found that the invoker in some other hymns seeks help from a single deity or a single group of deities. Thus with the help of *Indra* one intends to make his hater fall down and hopes that the breath quits him whom the invoker hates (AV.7.31). Another person requests *Agni* to thrust forth and thrust back his enemies who are already born and yet to be born respectively (AV.7.34). In AV.7.108, *Agni* is requested to burn the enemy and make him without abode as well as without offspring who being a kinsman or a stranger wants to harm the invoker either openly or secretly. In an abhicāra rite when a performer puts in the fire some fire sticks prepared from a tree struck by lightning he is instructed to recite those above three hymns (KauSū.48.37). *Maruts* are praised and requested to put that inimical mortal in the fetters of hate and to smite him with the hottest (heat) who desires to smite the invoker (AV.7.77). Uttering this hymn the performer of the same abhicāra rite puts faggots collected from a tree dried upright in the fire (KauSū.48.38). One



finds in AV.16.6 that the invoker requests Dawn to carry away evildreaming niggards, ill-named ones, *sadānvās*, *Kumbhikas*, assailers and revilers to the haters and cursers. In AV.9.2, the personified deity *Kāma* is requested to kill, destroy and torture the rivals of the invoker in various ways. Out of 25 stanzas of this hymn only the first stanza is found to be used in an abhicāra rite while a bull is released towards the enemies (KauSū.49.1). In another hymn there are references to many evil deeds of an evil-doer called *brahmajya* or the Brahmanseather where the invoker requests the Sun god to quake and destroy the evil-doer (AV.13.3). This hymn is prescribed to be recited by a practiser in his abhicāra rite while stretching forth snares in the forest as a part of his performance (KauSū.49.19).

It appears from some other hymns that the composers of these hymns themselves declare to put their enemy in various troubles for which they do not need any help from any god. By the power of their incantation they proclaim to bring whatever harm they want to bring on their enemies. Sometimes they do some physical actions with or without any object in their hands and announce that through these actions they are bringing such and such harm to their enemies. Thus a person binds a girdle (*mekhalā*) on his waist which he calls a hero-slayer (*vīraghnī*) and simultaneously declares to bind up the rival with the help of his girdle (AV.6.133). By means of the thunderbolt another person desires to crush the neck and nape of an enemy and finally to smite him down (AV.6.134). In a preparatory ceremony before various rites of abhicāra, these two hymns are found to be used while a girdle and a staff are prepared (KauSū.47.14). Again the performer in the same preparatory ceremony is instructed to strike the staff on the ground for three times while simultaneously reciting the second hymn, i.e. AV.6.134 (KauSū.47.18). In this hymn the staff itself is addressed as thunderbolt and the magician priest announces



that while eating something he makes himself strong enough to cut the shoulder of his enemy with a thunderbolt (AV.6.135). He also declares while drinking and swallowing something that he drinks and swallows the breath of that enemy as it were (AV.6.135.2-3). Another performer of an abhicāra rite while going through the consecration ceremony eats and drinks uttering this hymn (KauSū.47.20). An amulet made of *aśvattha*-wood which has come out of a *khadira* tree is highly praised in AV.3.6. A person binds this amulet and instructs it to smite down the person who hates the binder and whom the binder hates. According to KauSū.48.3, a practiser of an abhicāra rite while binding an amulet of *aśvattha*-wood should recite this hymn. Elsewhere one finds that a person strides out himself and describes his strides as the strides of Viṣṇu and each one of his strides is addressed as rival-slaying-one. He declares to make his haters and hated persons deprive of their portions from earth, atmosphere, region and quarters etc. (AV.10.5.25-35). A practiser of abhicāra rite after hurling water thunderbolt at his enemy is instructed to stride out reciting these verses (KauSū.49.14).

The magician priest while declaring to do various harms to the enemies is also found in some other hymns to call out the name of the lineage and the name of the mother of the enemy. By this he might be thinking to specify that particular enemy. A person in AV.16.7 declares that he pierces his enemy with ill success, extermination, calamity, seizure and darkness (st. 1). Uttering the enemies' mother's name as well as his lineage he wants to wipe off evil dreaming on him (st. 8). Another person in AV.16.8 utters the name of the enemy along with the name of his mother and lineage and afterwards declares to bar him from what is conquered, what is shot up from right, brilliance, heaven, sacrifice, cattle, progeny and heroes. He also wants the enemy not to be released from the fetters of seizure, perdition, ill-success and of so many other things.

From a few hymns one gets an idea of two sacrificers



who are rivals of each other and one of them wishes to nullify the other's sacrifice with the help of the power of his priests, gods and offerings. For instance, a sacrificer uses the faggots of *vikaṅkaṭa* wood and requests Agni to let all gods come to his call alone (AV.5.8.1), not to carry the oblations of his rival and not to let the gods to go to his rivals call (AV.5.8.3). He requests Indra in the following words – if they (the participants of the rival's sacrifice) have gone forward to the gods strong holds, have incantation their defences, if a body-protection, a complete protection they have encouraged themselves, all that do thou (Indra) make sap-less (AV.5.8.6). This hymn is prescribed by KauSū.48.8 to be used in an abhicāra rite while an offering is made in the fire with the help of a ladle made of *vikaṅkaṭa* wood. In another hymn (AV.7.70) a sacrificer, in order to destroy completely the sacrifice of his rival sends sorcerers, perditions, demons and desires that the gods sent by Indra may disturb the sacrificial butter of the rival and the rival may not meet with success (st. 2). In KauSū.48.27 this hymn along with AV.6.54 is prescribed to be recited while a practiser offers the barley grains etc. in the fire during an abhicāra rite against a rival who is an *āhitāgni* (i.e. one who has established sacred fires).

There are a group of hymns called battle charms the subject matter of which is to bring harm to the rival armies. AV.3.1 and 2 are designated as *mohanāni* or 'confounding' as these are to be used for confounding the armies in the battle field (KauSū.14.17). An appeal is made to the deities like Agni, Maruts, Vasus etc. to confound the intents of the rival army, to overcome, kill, burn or to disperse them. The goddess *apvā*, the deity of sin or evil (according to Sāyaṇa) is requested to consume the hearts of the rival army.

Under the group called *sāṅgrāmikāṇi* or 'battle hymns' AV.1.20 and 21 come. On different occasions of a great battle rite these two hymns are to be used according to KauSū.14.7-11. The performer of the rite requests different deities like Soma, Mitra, Varuna and Indra to give protection and to keep



far off the deadly weapons sent towards him by his rival army and also to overpower, to control, to smite down his enemies.

An appeal is made in AV.6.103 and 104 to the deities such as *Bṛhaspati*, *Savitṛ*, *Mitra*, *Aryaman*, *Bhaga*, *Indra* and *Agni* etc. for tying together the rival fighters and a person himself proclaims that he is also tying together his counter-fighters belonging to the highest, lowest and middle classes. Accordingly, these hymns are found to be used by KauSū.16.6 in a battle rite where a practiser prepares some fetters, puts them in the ways of the rival army uttering these hymns.

*Arbudi* and *Nyarbudi* are the two names of serpents mentioned in AV.11.9 and 10. They are directed to destroy the rival army and to protect the other army. *Arbudi* is said to have mastery over various deities (AV.11.9.25-26). In AV.11.10 there are descriptions of some evil beings which are helpful to *Triṣandhi*, the goddess of thunderbolt (according to Sāyaṇa). *Triṣandhi* is requested to fight against the rival army and is thought to have an army of her own (st. 4,6,7). *Kṛtyā* is ordered to help the army of *Triṣandhi* which fights against the rival fighters (st. 6). A performer of a battle rite should recite these hymns when the battle is already started (KauSū.16.12).

A wardrum is addressed in two hymns and praised as a lion, a bull and as *Indra*. It is requested to infuse terror in the minds of the rival-fighters and to bring various harms on them (AV.5.20 and 21). The war drum is to be charmed in a battle rite with the recitation of AV.6.20 and in the same rite an offering is to be made in the fire with AV.5.21 (KauSū.16.1-2).

The *aparājitagaṇa* or unconquered group of hymns in KauSū.14.7 includes AV.3.19 and reciting this hymn a practiser of a battle rite releases one white footed goat towards the enemies (KauSū.14.22). In this hymn the royal-



chaplain (*purohita*) encourages the army of his patron king with many heroic words and declares to cut off the arms of the foe-men with the oblation which he offers. Through his incantation he proclaims to destroy the rival army.

The loud declaration on the part of the invoker or the seer or the house chaplain who usually performs various domestic abhicāra rites on behalf of a house holder or a king is remarkable in some of the above hymns from the magical point of view. Not always seeking the help from the deities he himself proclaims to destroy or cause various harms to the enemies and for that he derives the magical force from his mastery over Vedic incantations, a part of the esoteric power of hymns called *Brahman* in general. Thus his prayer as well as his command both are found to be utilized for the sake of blackmagic. As already mentioned earlier and will be more noticed in the forth coming discussions, this is an unique characteristic of the Vedic ritualists in whom the daring power of a magician and the humbleness of a priest are found simultaneously.

From the subject matter of some other hymns one comes to know how sexual jealousy leads to the practise of blackmagic. A description is given in AV.6.138, about making a person impotent and says – ‘the two god made tubes that are yours in which stands your virility, those I split for you with a peg’ (*śamyayā*) (st. 4). In an abhicāra rite while burrying some charmed substances including urine and faces the practiser should recite this hymn (KauSū.48.32). The same subject matter is noticed in AV.7.90. A person seeks help from Indra and Varuṇa to take away the vigour from the male organ of his rival (st. 2). This hymn is to be used in a rite against the paramour of one’s wife and the practiser utters the hymn to make the paramour impotent (KauSū.36.35). Another person makes use of a plant which he calls *trṣṭikā* (rough-one) against the love-making of a man and woman, most probably between his wife and her paramour (AV.7.113). Here, the plant is ordered to act against



the paramour and the wife. According to KauSū.36.38, the practiser of a rite against a paramour throws a leaf called *bāṇāparṇī* to the place where the paramour uses to meet the wife while reciting this hymn AV.3.18 which is identical with RV.10.145 excepting an interchange of the places of stanzas 3 and 4. It is against the co-wives of a woman. The KauSū.36.19-22, prescribes this hymn in a rite to overpower one's co-wives.

In some hymns the desire to bring various misfortunes on women is expressed. AV.7.35 is an incantation to prevent the delivery of a woman. One proclaims to make the upper part of her womb lower and to cover up the openings of her womb by means of a stone (st. 2-3). In order to prevent a woman from giving birth a male child a charmed liquid is prepared and mixed with the food and ornament of that woman. While doing so the performer has to recite this hymn along with AV.7.34 (KauSū.36.23). In AV.1.14 one finds that a person desires to make a girl spinster. With the help of a mighty incantation he tries to shut up the female organ of the girl forever (st. 4). It is expected that she should remain at her parent's house unmarried or she should marry *Yama*, the lord of death (st. 2-3). To bring misfortune on a woman a practiser burries some charmed substances reciting this hymn (KauSū. 36.15).

Some hymns from the AV. give a vivid description of demons and evil spirits. Several deities, plants and amulets are addressed, requested or instructed to destroy the evil beings. In KauSū.42.23 a person binds a *jaṅgiḍa* amulet in order to defend himself from evil beings and while binding he recites AV.2.4 in which this amulet is praised and ordered to spoil the *viṣkandhas*, niggards etc. Similarly, in AV.3.9 a person binds an amulet in order to destroy and eradicate evil beings like *viṣkandha*, *karśapha*, *viśapha*, *khargala* and *kābava*. This hymn is prescribed to be uttered to eradicate some evil beings from a person in a rite against these evil



beings (KauSū.43.1). The evil beings are supposed to be unseen enemies and efforts are made to destroy them.

Agni is the chief destroyer of the demons and evil spirits among all other deities. Wherever in the hymns the invoker seeks help from various deities in order to destroy or eradicate these evil creatures one finds that deities like Agni are invoked. For example, in the hymns AV.1.7 and 8 which come under *cātana gaṇa* (KauSū.8.25), Agni is requested to make the sorcerer cry out and come out himself saying 'here I am' (AV.1.7.4). Agni knows the birth place of the devourers who are always secret and therefore, Agni is again requested to slay them with hundredfold transfixion (*śatatarham*) (AV.1.8.4). In both the hymns one point is to be marked that the sorcerers, both male and female appear to be practising sorcery with the help of some familiar demons and evil spirits. Some other hymns in which Agni is invoked for this purpose are AV.1.28, 5.29, 6.32 and 2.18. In the last hymn (AV.2.18) Agni is invoked against various types of enemies belonging to both human and non human groups. These enemies are *bhrātṛvyas*, *sapatnas*, *arāyas*, *piśācas* and *sadānvās*. In a rite to destroy evil beings when faggots of various trees are put in fire this hymn is to be recited (KauSū.48.1).

In order to destroy the evil beings the invoker seeks the help of god in addition to his own power of incantation as depicted in some other hymns. For example, one person declares to make the *sadānvās* disappear by going around their abodes and winning all their races (AV.2.14). He also requests *Bhūtapati* to drive them out and Indra to subdue them with his thunderbolt (st. 4). Elsewhere, the composer of a hymn himself is the sole eradicator of *piśācas* (AV.4.36). He calls himself the vexer of *piśācas*, in front of whom the *piśācas* can not find any hiding place (st. 6). Whenever he enters a village the *piśācas* disappear from there immediately (st. 7). Even the presence of his formidable power (*ugramśahaḥ*) is enough to make the *piśācas* disappear (st. 8).



One gets information about the practise of *pratyabhicāra* or *pratikṛtyā* i.e. counter action of *kṛtyā* or counter sorcery from some hymns of AV. This practices have two fold power, defensive and offensive. It not only protects a person from the harmful effects of sorcery practised against him but it simultaneously directs the practised power to attack its sender or maker. *Kṛtyā*, the personified blackmagic appears frequently in these hymns and accordingly these hymns are found to be grouped under a section called *kṛtyā-pratiharaṇa-gaṇa* (a group of hymns meant for removal of *kṛtyā*) (KauSū.39.7 and AVPariśiṣṭa.32.2). In these hymns there are references to amulets which indicate that the primary purpose of these hymns is defensive one. The practiser of counter blackmagical rites some times invokes various deities to smite down the practised evil-power or to send it back towards its sender. The counter practiser in some hymns himself declares to do the same without depending on any deity.

An amulet called *śrāktya* made of *śrakti* (a synonym of *tilaka*) is praised in AV.2.11 as a re-entrant (*pratisara*), counter conjuring (*pratyabhicāraṇa*). In another hymn a plant called *apāmārga* is praised as the reverted one (*punaḥsara*) (AV.4.17.2) and the counter practiser hopes that this plant should smite the witchcraft makers with the help of same *kṛtyā* which they have done through various objects (AV.4.17.4). With the help of the same plant a person desires to destroy the *kṛtyā* in AV.4.18 and 19. While all these hymns come under the *kṛtyāpratiharaṇagaṇa*, the first hymn (AV.2.11) is used separately twice. While binding an amulet of *tilaka* wood in a counter abhicāra rite the practiser utters this hymn (KauSū.39.1) and also when he sprinkles the ankles of *kṛtyā* with curd (KauSū.39.13). The other three hymns (AV.4.17, 18, 19) are used only in the preparation of holy water for a counter witchcraft rite (KauSū.39.7).

There is a mention of some spirits in AV.2.24. These are thought to be the employees of sorcerers. In each stanza of



this hymn the *kimīdins* are ordered to go back to their senders and eat them. Some very peculiar names of these evil spirits are given here such as *śerabhaka*, *śerabha*, *śevṛdhaka*, *mroka* and *anumroka* etc. These appear to be the agents of some demons or sorcerers who make use of them in practising sorcery. The subject matter of this hymn is apparently related to *pratyabhicāra*.

Apart from the above discussions on the blackmagical aspect of some individual hymns and verses with special references to their use in various blackmagical rites one finds some verses and hymns being recited during sacrificial performances are mystically said to be identical with thunderbolt and thereby said to bring harm to enemies. Thus for example, after the recitation of the last verse (*paridhānīyā*) of the morning-litany the Hotṛ priest being ordered by the Adhvaryu recites the hymn from RV.10.30. It has fifteen verses and therefore said to be identical with a fifteenfold thunderbolt. The twelfth verse of this hymn contains the word *āpaḥ* (water) which is also considered to be the thunderbolt. The same verse contains the word *sarasvat*, which is again called a thunderbolt because *sarasvatī* is speech and speech is considered as thunderbolt (cf. AV.4.1). So the entire hymn is connected or contains three thunderbolts for which the hymn itself is said to be identical with a threefold thunderbolt. Therefore it is assumed that the recitation of this hymn leads the sacrificer to hurl this three fold thunderbolt at his foe who hates him (KB.12.2). One finds the *sāmidhenī* verses (kindling-verses) are originally eleven in number but at the time of recitation the first and the last verse are to be repeated thrice each by which their number becomes fifteen. These fifteen verses being recited are identical with the fifteen fold thunderbolt (KB.7.2). It is also indicated in TB.3.5.1.1 that the Hotṛ priest while reciting these *sāmidhenī* verses intends to tremple down on the hateful rival by this fifteenfold thunderbolt. These verses are taken from RV.3.27.1, 6.16.10-12, 3.27.13-15, 1.21.1, 3.27.4 and 5.28.5-6 (cf.



ĀśvŚS.1.2.7). The significance of the harmful character attached to these hymns or verses is entirely depending on the description given in the *Brāhmaṇa* texts that some portions of these verses or the verses themselves are identical with thunderbolt. This theological imposition is purely artificial because, neither the verses contain any harmful objects inside nor these describe anything to that effect in themselves naturally. These are harmful simply because these are described to be so by some explanatory ritual texts.

Some verses are considered to be harmful because of some sentences which they contain. While reciting these verses the priest is supposed to create blackmagical effects. It is instructed in AB.3.11 that if the Hotṛ priest makes a mistake by surpassing the *nivid* formulas (short formulas in prose consisting of twelve clauses) at the time of reciting a *nividhānāya* hymn (the hymn, during the recitation of which the *nivid* formulas are to be inserted) he has to recite another hymn (RV.10.57) for the purpose of expiation. This hymn meant for expiatory recitation contains a sentence at the last foot of the first verse. The sentence is –‘Let not evil spirits stand within us.’ According to AB.3.11 this recitation leads to smite away all who plot evil (against the sacrificer). In the soma-sacrifice, after the soma-plants have been bought, these are to be carried forward to the *prāgvamśa*. At that time Hotṛ priest has to recite a verse (AV.7.8.1). The fourth foot of that verse is –‘do thou drive far the foes with all powers’. The recitation of this sentence (verse) is said to lead one to drive away one’s evil rival who hates one (AB.1.13).

At the time of recitation of some verses in different ritual contexts certain words which occur in those verses are considered to be harmful and supposed to bring blackmagical results. Thus while offering the *ājyabhāga* in the N. and FM. sacrifices a verse is to be recited as the offering verse (*yājya*) for the *āgneya* offering. The verse (RV.10.8.7) contains the word ‘*niyut*’ (team). This word being uttered at



the time of recitation of the verse is supposed to enable the sacrificer to appropriate the cattle of his enemy (TS.2.6.2.3). Similarly, in the eleven kindling verses the ninth verse contains the word *adhvara* (imperishable). In the context of the discussions on the recitation at different kindling verses in the N. and FM. sacrifices, it is mentioned in TS.2.5.8.5 that the priest recites the verse containing the word '*adhvara*', thereby he causes the enemy of the sacrificer to perish.

The priest is instructed sometimes, to bring confusion in his recitations during sacrificial performances if the practise of *abhicāra* is intended. And he creates confusion by changing the order of recitations or surpassing some verses while reciting. The recitation of the *ājyaśāstra* in a soma sacrifice has three constituents. They are *āhava* (call), *nivid* (short prose formulas) and the *sūkta* (hymn). The priest usually first utters the call, then utters the *nivid* formulas and lastly recites the hymn. If he desires to make a man (the sacrificer) deprive of the lordly power (*kṣātra*), he is instructed to recite the hymn in the middle of the *nivids*. Again if he wants to make the sacrificer deprive of his people (*viśah*) then he should recite the *nivids* in the middle of the hymn. *Nivid* and hymn are said to be identical with *kṣātra* and *viśah*. respectively. By reciting the *śāstra* in changed manner as mentioned above, the priest divides the *nivids* and the hymn and brings confusion. This confused recitation is thought to make the sacrificer destitute of his lordly power and people (AB.2.23). Similarly while reciting the *marutvotīya śāstra*, the *nivid* formulas are to be inserted in the hymn. The hymn (RV.10.73) has eleven verses and after reciting the sixth verse the priest utters the *nivid* formulas and at the beginning of the formula he should utter the call (*āhāva*). If the priest desires to make the sacrificer be deprived of both the sides, i.e. from the side of his ancestors and from the side of offspring or from his paternal as well as maternal side then it is instructed that he should insert the *āhāva* call at both the



sides of the *nivid* formulas. If the sacrificer himself wants to practise abhicāra and desires to smite the people (*viśaḥ*) by the lordly power (*kṣatra*) then the priest should divide the hymn thrice with the *nivid* formulas. Again if he wants to smite the lordly power by the people, then for him, the priest should divide the *nivid* formulas thrice with the help of hymn (AB.3.19). In all these cases, the priest in order to bring blackmagical effects is instructed to use the *āhāva* call and *nivid* formulas in improper places and make the recitation of the *śāstra* confused. The priest can also bring confusion by avoiding or passing over some verses in the recitation of *praugaśāstra*, if he intends to practise blackmagic. This *śāstra* consists of the recitation of seven triplets (a group of three verses is called a triplet) meant for seven deities. If the priest wants to make the sacrificer be deprived of his expiration then he is instructed to make confusion while reciting the triplet to *Vāyu* (RV.1.2.1-3). In this way the priest can make confusion in the triplet to Indra and *Vāyu* (RV.1.2.4-6) to Mitra and Varuṇa (RV.1.2.7-9), to *Aśvins* (RV.1.3.1-3), to Indra (RV.1.3.4-6), to *Viśvedevāḥ* (RV.1.3.7-9) and to *Sarasvatī* (RV.1.3.10-12), if he wants to make the sacrificer be deprived of his expiration and inspiration, eyes, ears, strength, limbs and speech respectively (AB.3.3). In order to create confusion he has to simply pass over a verse or a line from the triplets.

The discussion on the hymns and verses shows that the practise of blackmagic is more clearly associated with the AV. than with RV. Some references found in the RV. show that though the blackmagic was practised in general it was considered to be blameworthy. This can be inferred from the declaration of *Vasiṣṭha* in connection with a charge against him that he was a sorcerer and used to kill human beings with blackmagic (cf. RV.7.104.15). People of all *varṇas* beginning with the *Brāhmaṇas* to *Śūdras* are found to be involved in these practices (cf. AV.10.1.3). The sacrificial institution is also said to be the means of blackmagical



practices (AV.8.5.15). Further, there was a provision of *pratyaḥbhicāra* or *pratikṛtyā* (counter blackmagic) in order to protect oneself from the blackmagic of others and even to revert it towards them. The characteristics of evil men and evil spirits or enemies belonging to nonhuman beings do not differ very much. And accordingly the nature of the hymns recited against these two types of enemies contains little or no difference. Even one and the same hymn sometimes stands against both these types of enemies (cf. AV.2.18). In the practise of blackmagic the demons and evil spirits seem to have a distinct role. They very often appear as the employees of sorcerers (*yātudhānas*) who possess evil powers. The deities are invoked in order to destroy both these enemies, human and nonhuman. Against the nonhuman enemies Agni plays a very important role. Some hymns are connected with the use of amulets which are mostly found for the purpose of protection from demons and evil spirits. When we take notice of the ritual use of hymns and verses of blackmagical nature in general we observe that these are very loosely connected with the ritual as far as their intents are concerned. Some verses being recited in the sacrificial performances are considered to be blackmagical due to some sentences or words which they contain in themselves. But many hymns or verses do not contain any reference to blackmagic at all so far their meaning is concerned. They are to be used in the blackmagical ritual only because the *Brāhmaṇa* texts have prescribed so. While some such verses are in the form of prayers, some are of the nature of command and declaration on the part of the invoker or the seer for the purpose of bringing blackmagical effects.

### (B) Yajus Formula

The second type of verbal rites are the utterance of prose formulas mainly from the *Yajurveda* texts. Though there are some formulas in the metrical forms also, these Yajus



formulas considerably differ from the hymns and verses due to their general prosaic feature. These are to be uttered by the priest while performing various sacrificial rites prescribed in the *Brāhmaṇa* and *Śrauta Sūtra* texts. It is to be marked that many of such formulas appear to be magical. While discussing the magical utility of the *Yajurveda* Macdonell says – ‘YV. occupies an intermediate position between RV. and AV. as regards magic. In its original part which consists of prose formulas, the gods are only secondary, bearing a kind of mechanical relation to the sacrificial ceremonial with which these formulas are associated and which they follow in its minutest details. Its character is thus of a magical rather than a religious one.’<sup>15</sup> Among these formulas there are many which are prescribed to be uttered for the sake of blackmagic. The intention behind them is to bring harm to the enemies both human and non-human. In the following lines the blackmagical aspects of *yajus* formulas are illustrated.

It is indicated through some *yajus* formulas that the demons and evil spirits can be destroyed by means of fire<sup>16</sup>. While performing some sacrificial rites with the help of fire the performers utter certain formulas through which they announce the destruction of evil beings attached to various sacrificial objects. For example, the priest takes a sickle in his hand for cutting the sacrificial grass in the N. and FM. sacrifices and heats the same in the *gārhapatya* fire uttering the formula – ‘the Raksas is burnt up, the evil spirits are burnt up’ (*pratyusṭam rakṣaḥ pratyusṭā arātayaḥ*) (TS.1.1.2.1; MS.1.1.2; KS.1.2; KapS.1.2; TB.3.2.2.2; BŚS.1.2; BhŚS.1.3.6; MŚS.1.1.1.26; ĀpŚS.1.3.3). The word ‘*arātayaḥ*’ is translated by Keith as ‘evil spirits’. It can however, be better translated as ‘enemies’ in general<sup>17</sup>. This rite indicates that the sickle was believed to be attached with some invisible destructive creatures. The purpose of the utterance of the formula here is to destroy these evil creatures. It is mentioned in TB.3.2.2.2 – ‘thus he



utters for the destruction of the Rakṣas' (*rakṣasāmapahatyai*). The same or quite similar formulas occur in other places also where one may notice the word *nirdagtham* in the place of the word *pratyusṭam* etc. When the priest heats the *agnihotra*-ladle and the winnowing basket on the *gārhapatya* fire he utters the same formula (TS.1.1.4.1; MS.1.1.4; KS.1.4; KapS.1.4; VS.1.7; ŚB.1.1.2.3; TB.3.2.4.3; BŚS.1.4; BhŚS.1.18.12; MŚS.1.2.1.22; ĀpŚS.1.17.1; KŚS.2.3.11). While the priest puts the burning embers on the potsherds he utters - 'the Rakṣas is burnt up, the evil spirits are burnt up (*nirdagdham rakṣo nirdagdha arātayaḥ*) (TS.1.1.7.1; MS.1.1.8; KS.1.7; TB.3.2.7.1; BŚS.1.8; BhŚS.1.24.4; MŚS.1.2.3.1; ĀpŚS.1.22.3). Similarly in a soma-sacrifice the priest, after cutting the omentum from the victim (animal) for Agni and Soma heats it on the fire while uttering- 'the Rakṣas is scorched the evil spirits are scorched' (*pratyusṭam rakṣaḥ pratyusṭā arātayaḥ*) (MS.1.2.16; KS.3.6; MŚS.1.8.2.20). The priest at the time of cooking the offering cakes during the N. and FM. sacrifices encircles the cake with fire uttering - 'the Rakṣas is obstructed, the evil spirits are obstructed' (*antarītam rakṣontarītā arātayaḥ*) (TS.1.1.8.1; TB.3.2.8.5; BŚS.1.10; BhŚS.1.26.4-5; KŚS.2.5.22; ĀpŚS.1.25.8).

As an addition to the above mentioned formula the priest in certain cases utters the words meaning - 'I burn the Rakṣases' or 'I kill the Rakṣases' etc. Thus after taking *sruva* etc. in his hand the priest heats on the *gārhapatya* fire with the formula - 'the Rakṣas is burnt up, with Agni's keenest flame I burn you' (TS.1.1.10.1; TB.3.3.1.1; BŚS.1.12; BhŚS.2.4.2). There is a rite called *pañcedhmīya* offering during the *Rājasūya* sacrifice. In this rite the *āhavanīya* fire is pushed out to the four quarters and the kindling sticks are placed in each part of the fire. One stick is put at the centre after which the offerings are made in these five places of fire. Then the priest collects all the sticks from every side and while putting them at the centre utters - 'the Rakṣases are collected, the Rakṣasas



are burnt up, here do I burnt up Rakṣasas' (TS.1.8.7.2; TB.1.7.1.5; BŚS.12.4). After this rite the priest has to make another offering with *apāmārgas* made into groats. While offering these groats in the fire the following formula is to be uttered by the priest – 'on the instigation... I offer for the death of Rakṣases, the Rakṣases are slain, we have killed the Rakṣasas'. (TS.1.8.7.2; TB.1.7.1.9; BŚS.12.4).

Sometimes the priests shake off or clear off or winnow away some sacrificial materials or objects during the performances. While doing these actions they utter certain formulas through which they declare that the demons or evil spirits are eradicated shaken off or cleared off from those objects or materials. The sacrificial objects from which the eradication of the evil beings is intended are thought to be preoccupied by evil beings. For example, during the rite of preparation of grains for the cakes to be offered in the N. and FM. sacrifices the priest has to shake off one black antelope-skin in the rubbish-heap for three times before spreading it on the ground. While shaking the skin the priest utters – 'the Rakṣas is shaken off, the evil spirits are shaken off ...' (*avadhūtām rakṣaḥ... etc.*) (TS.1.1.5.1; MS.1.1.6; KS.1.5; KapS.1.5; VS.1.14; TB.3.2.5.5; ŚB.1.1.4.4; MŚS.1.2; 5.6; KŚS.2.4.2; ĀpŚS.1.19.3). After husking of the grains the husks are winnowed-away on the rubbish-heap and at that time the following formula is to be uttered by the priest – 'the Rakṣas is cleared away the evil spirits are cleared away' (*parāpūtām rakṣaḥ...*) (TS.1.1.5.2; MS.1.1.7; KS.1.5; KapS.1.5; VS.1.16; TB.3.2.5.10; ŚB.1.1.4.21; BŚS.1.6; BhŚS.1.22.3; MŚS.1.2.2.20; ĀpŚS.1.20.7; KŚS.2.4.18).

Proper names of certain evil beings against whom the respective rites are performed are uttered in some other formulas. The priest through these formulas declares to drive away or smite away those evil beings. A demon called 'Araru'<sup>18</sup> is said to be smitten away from the earth through a symbolical rite of striking a grass-bush called *stambayajus*



by means of the wooden sword. This rite comes under the preparation of the altar for the N. and FM. sacrifices. While doing so the priest utters the formula – ‘Araru is smitten away from the earth’ for the first time, ‘Araru is smitten away from the earth, the place of sacrifice,’ for the second time, and ‘Araru who does not sacrifice to the gods is smitten away from the earth’, for the third time (TS.1.1.9.1; MS.1.1.10; KS.1.9; KapS.1.9; VS.1.26; TB.3.2.9.4; ŚB.1.2.4.17-18; BhŚS.2.1.7; MŚS.1.2.4.16; ĀpŚS.2.1.5; KŚS.2.6.14).<sup>19</sup> Other two demons namely *Śaṇḍa* and *Marka* are declared to be driven away from the soma-sacrifice at the time of drawing the cups of soma-juice namely *śukra* and *manthin*. After these two cups of soma-juice have been drawn the priest cleanses the lower part of the cups with the help of two unsprinkled stake-chips uttering – ‘driven away are *śaṇḍa* and *Marka* together with NN.’ (TS.6.4.10.2; MS.4.6.3; TB.1.1.1.5; ŚB.4.2.1.14 and 20; BhŚS.13.23.13-15).<sup>20</sup>

There are certain formulas through which the priests claim to bring similar harm not only to the evil beings but also to the enemies, i.e. haters and hated persons or who assails (*arātīyati*). In a soma-sacrifice while the priests and others go for buying Soma with a cow, there is a rite to be performed on the seventh foot print of the cow. A gold piece is to be kept on this foot print and the priest has to draw a line encircling the foot print by means of another piece of gold or the horn of a black antelope. While drawing the line he has to utter – ‘the Rakṣas is enclosed, the evil spirits are enclosed, thus I cut the neck of the Rakṣases, thus I cut the neck of him who hates us and whom we hate’ (... *yosmān dveṣṭi yañ ca vāyam dviṣmah*). (TS.1.2.5.1; BŚS.6.13; BhŚS.10.15.9-10). In this context KS.2.5 and KapS.1.18 mention the formula as follows – ‘Thus I cut the neck of the Rakṣas, thus I also cut the neck of the enemy who being equal or unequal assails us.’<sup>21</sup> Similarly, at the time of making the *sadas*-shed in a soma-sacrifice the priest has to dig a hole at



the centre for the *audumbarī*-post. Before, digging he first draws a line encircling the proposed hole and utters the above formula (TS.1.3.1; BŚS.6.26-27; BhŚS.12.9.15; ĀpŚS.11.11.2). But the formula mentioned in MS.1.2.10; KS.2.12 and KapS.2.6 is – 'thus I cut the neck of Rakṣas, thus I also cut the neck of the enemy who being equal or unequal assails us.'<sup>22</sup> (cf. MSS.1.8.2.3). After slaying the victim for Agni and Soma the priest cuts the omentum for offering the same on the fire. Before offering he has to throw away the cut part of the grassblade which he has dipped into the blood of the victim. While throwing it away with his left hand he utters – 'thou art the share of Rakṣas, him who hates us and whom we hate, here, him I lead to the lowest darkness' (TS.1.3.9.2; BŚS.4.6; ĀpŚS.7.18.14; BhŚS.7.14.10). In this last formula the cut part of the grass dipped with blood of the victim is addressed as the share of the Rakṣases and by throwing it away the performer declares that he throws away the Rakṣases. Here the share of the Rakṣas is thought to be sympathetically connected with the Rakṣas himself. Therefore, the symbolical action done on the share is believed to effect its owner or the share-holder (Rakṣas).<sup>23</sup>

Some sacrificial objects are said to be harmful by their identification with pain (*śuk*) etc. or these are identified with some other harmful objects like thunderbolt etc. Through certain formulas the priest directs these objects to bring harm to the enemy or he hopes that such and such harms are brought on the enemy (with the help of these objects). For instance, in an animal sacrifice (which either form a part of a soma-sacrifice or which is performed as an independent rite), there is a rite of burying the heart-spit with the formula – 'thou art pain (*śuk*), pain him who hates us and whom we hate' (TS.1.3.11.1; BhŚS.7.23.2; MSS.1.8.6.20; KŚS.6.10.3; ĀpŚS.7.27.15). During the great fire-building rite when the *śatarudrīya* offerings are over the priest sprinkles water on the altar starting from the point where he has put a stone at



the southeastern corner. After sprinkling of the water he puts the stone inside the water pitcher and standing at the south-western part of the altar and facing towards the east he throws away the pitcher with the stone towards the Nirṛti's region or towards the south-western quarter. The stone is considered to be the pain and evil of Rudra (cf. ŚB.9.1.2.10). While throwing it away the priest utters –'let the pain enter him whom we hate', (VS.17.1) or naming the hated person he may say –'Let the pain enter so and so' (ŚB.9.1.2.12). In the same fire building rite when the fifth layer is being set up, four thunderbolt bricks (*vajriṇī*) are to be put in four quarters. The priest puts these bricks addressing them as Indra's thunderbolt. The formula he utters is –'thou art the thunderbolt of Indra, slaying foes, guarding our bodies, laying on wait, he who in the east, south, west, north as a foe plots against us may he strike on this rock' (TS.5.7.3.1; ĀpSS.17.9.5-6). This formula indicates that the evil efforts of the enemy is made futile by this rite.

Similar formulas are at times to be accompanied with certain ritual actions during sacrificial performances. The performers do these actions in order to bring harm to the enemy or they themselves declare to do so with the help of such ritual activities. For example, there are three after offerings (*anuyājas*) to be offered in context of the N. and FM. sacrifices. These are offered on the fore, middle and hind part of a burning fire stick and said to be identical with three dreadful objects such as the thunderbolt, the hail-stone and the heavenly fire brand (*aśani*, *hrāduni* and *ulkuṣī*) respectively (cf. ŚB.11.2.7.21). According to ŚB.11.2.7.22 at the end of each of these three offerings the sacrificer has to utter an after formula (*anumantraṇa*). These after formulas are as follows – 'O thunderbolt, smite NN.' After the first offering; 'O hail-stone, smite NN.' After the second offering; and 'O fire-brand, smite NN.', after the third offering. At the place of NN. He has to utter the name of his enemy. As a result, it is



mentioned that, the enemy either dies very soon or becomes covered with outflowing blood or becomes covered with scorching heat (ŚB.11.2.7.23). Similarly after the silent offering in the N. and FM. sacrifices, the sacrificer should utter 'thou art a deceiver, may I be undeceived, may I deceive NN.' (TS.1.6.2.4; KS.32.1; BŚS.3.18). In these two examples the offerings are offered by the priest on behalf of the sacrificer and after the priest has offered them the sacrificer has to utter these formulas. The sacrificer has to take Viṣṇu strides in the N. and FM. sacrifices uttering some formulas. At the time of his first stride he utters - 'thou art the step of Viṣṇu, smiting enmity (*abhimātihā*), I step across the earth with the Gayatri metre, excluded is he whom we hate.' At his further strides he utters - 'smiting imprecation (*abhiśastihā*),' 'killer of the evil-practiser', (*arātīyato hantā*), and 'the killer of the hostile one' (*śatrūyate hantā*) serially with some other changes in the formulas (TS.1.6.5.2; BŚS.3.21; BhŚS.4.20.7).

Certain formulas are found to be uttered addressing some sacrificial materials or objects of which the names are thought to be connected with some harmful actions and these materials or objects are directed to eradicate or do harm to the evil beings or enemies. Thus in the rite for preparation of sacrificial materials at the time of the N. and FM. sacrifices the priest touches the yoke of the cart which holds the offering materials uttering the formula - 'thou art yoke (*dhūr*), injure him (*dhūrva*) who injures us, injure him whom we injure' (TS.1.1.4.1; MS.1.1.4; KS.1.4; KapS.1.4; VS.1.8; TB.3.2.4.4; ŚB.1.1.2.10; BŚS.1.4.5; BhŚS.1.19.4-5; MŚS.1.2.1.24; ĀpŚS.1.17.5 and KŚS.2.3.13). In a soma sacrifice the same formula is to be uttered by the priest who touches the two holes in the yoke of the cart that becomes ready to carry the soma-plants after these plants have been purchased from a soma-seller and loaded on the cart (MS.1.2.6; KS.2.7; MŚS.2.1.4.24). The word *dhūr* (yoke) has no semantic connection with the word *dhūrva* (injure)<sup>24</sup> but only has a



similarity of sounds. Similarly, before setting up the sacrificial post in a soma sacrifice the priest throws some barley grains (*yava*) into the hole meant for erecting the post. While throwing he utters –‘thou are barley (*yava*), bar (*yavaya* or *yāvaya*) from us the foes, bar evil spirits’ (TS.1.3.6.1; MS.1.2.14; KS.3.3; KapS.2.10; VS.6.1; MŚS.1.8.2.8; ĀpŚS.7.9.10). Here also it is difficult to connect semantically these two terms *yava* and *yavaya* where as their similarity of sound is worth noticing.

By means of some other formulas the priests or the sacrificer themselves declare to bring harm to the enemies by using some sacrificial materials. There is an after formula to be uttered by the sacrificer in connection with the two grass-blades called *vidhṛtī* in the N. and FM. sacrifices. These two blades of grass separate the bundle of grass called *prastara* from the other sacrificial grass (*barhis*). Just after putting these blades of grass on the altar an after formula is to be uttered (*anumantraṇa*). The first of the formula is – I cut off the enemies by these two *vidhṛtis*, those enemies who have already taken birth and those who are yet to be born, I kill them with the help of these two machines (*yantrābhyām*) (TB.3.7.6.7). After the *upabhṛt* is placed on the *prastara* grass another after formula is to be uttered of which the first part is as follows –‘I have killed the enemies with this *upabhṛt*, those who have already taken birth and those who are yet to be born’ (TB.3.7.6.9). The priest has to throw a grass blade which has been taken out previously from the *prastara*-bunch. While throwing this grass blade he utters a formula –‘this stalk is spread below the heaven and stands erect on the earth, by this may we cause pain to the enemy in many ways, let my enemy be pained a lot’ (TB.3.7.6.19). When the portion of *īdā* for the sacrificer is being cut by the priest in the N. and FM. sacrifices the sacrificer is instructed to utter a formula – ‘him who near or afar plots evil against me, with this (*īdā*) may I conquer him’. (TS.1.6.3.1; BŚS.3.18).



In some formulas the deities are requested to harm to the enemies. While setting up the fifth layer of the fire altar there are five bricks called (*asapatnā*) (without rival) to be placed. The priest while placing two of these bricks towards east and west utters –‘O Agni, drive away our foes those are born, drive away our foes those are unborn ...’ and ‘O Agni, drive away our foes those are born with force, drive away our foes those are unborn ...’ (TS.4.3.12.1; MS.2.8.7; KS.17.6; VS.15.1-2; ŚB.8.5.1.8; BŚS.10.4-5; MŚS.6.2.2.1; KŚS.17.11.3). At the time of the preparation for the first layer of the fire altar the priest has to put the heads of certain animals in a pan and worship these heads with five formulas addressing Agni and the last part of the formulas is –‘(O Agni) may your heat reach him whom we hate’, (MS.2.7.17; KS.16.17; KapS.25.8; MŚS.6.1.7.29). During the ceremony of rekindling the fire the priest has to adore the fire uttering certain formulas in which Agni is requested to do various harms to the enemies. The formulas are –‘O Agni, the heat that you have, do thou heat him with that who hates us and whom we hate’, ‘the scorch that you have, scorch him with that ...’, ‘the flame that you have, inflame him with that ...’, ‘the destruction that you have, destroy him with that ...’ (MS.1.5.2; KS.6.9; KapS.4.8). At the time of preparation of the altar for the N. and FM. sacrifices the priest while throwing away a grass bush (*stambayajus*) from the altar towards the rubbish heap utters a formula addressing Savitr, ‘O Savitr, bind thou in the farthest distance with a hundred fatters him who hates us and whom we hate, thence let him not free’ (TS.1.1.9.1; MS.1.1.10; KS.1.9; KapS.1.9; VS.1.25; TB.3.2.9.3-4; ŚB.1.2.4.16; BŚS.1.11; ĀpŚS.2.1.6; BhŚS.2.1.9; MŚS.1.2.4.13; KŚS.2.6.19). In these two examples the deities Agni and Savitr are requested independently to do harm on the enemies. In another formula one finds that the performer hopes that the presiding deities of waters and plants should become unfriendly towards his haters and hated persons. The priests and



sacrificer take their purificatory bath (*avabhṛtha*) at the end of the soma-sacrifice. While taking bath in the water place they take handfuls of water and uttering a formula throw water towards that side in which their enemy is believed to be present. The formula is – ‘Be the waters and plants friendly to us, be they hostile to him who hates us and whom we hate’ (TS.1.4.45.22-3; BŚS.8.20; BhŚS.7.23.2; ĀpŚS.13.21.1). At the end of the *Sautrāmaṇī* sacrifice also this rite is performed with the utterance of same formula. (ŚB.12.9.2.6; KŚS.19.5.19). In an animal sacrifice when the heart-spit is buried in a moistening ground the priests, the sacrificer and his wife touch the water uttering the same formula (MS.1.2.18; KS.3.8; KapS.2.15; VS.6.22; ŚB.3.8.5.11; KŚS.6.10.5). The same formula is also uttered by the priest and the sacrificer in the course of the N. and FM. sacrifices. After the invocation of *idā*, the priests and the sacrificer eat their respective portions of *idā* and after eating they sprinkle water on their body with the help of two purifying *darbha*-blades and at that time they utter the same formula (KŚS.3.4.24).

In some other cases it is noticed that the deities are addressed in the formulas but the sacrificer, without requesting them to do harm to his enemies himself declares to do so with the help of some sacrificial materials or ritual activities. In the N. and FM. sacrifices when the oblations are placed on the altar, the sacrificer utters a formula, ‘O Agni, in the sacrifice of mine, whatever may be spoiled, whatever of the butter, O Vayu, may be spilt, with this do I smite the rival who is hard to slay, I place him on the lap of the destruction’ (TS.1.6.2.1-2; BŚS.3.16). There are three cups of Soma-juice, supplementary to the main cups meant for the pairs of deities viz. *IndraVāyu*, *MitraVaruṇa* and *Aśvins*, to be offered in the morning pressing of a somasacrifice. These three supplementary cups are called *pratinigrāhya*. After each of these cups is offered the sacrificer has to utter formulas addressing the deities of the cup. He utters at



*IndraVāyu* of the first cup – ‘O *IndraVāyu*, the foe who assails us, O Lords of splendor, may I here hurl him below my feet, so that O *Indra*, I may shine as the highest’, Similarly, he utters two more times addressing *MitraVaruṇa* and *Aśvins* serially (TS.3.2.10.2; BŚS.7.12). In this second example though the sacrificer does not declare to use the offerings directly against his foes yet it is indicated that he intends to put his enemy below his feet by the help of each of these offerings. Thus in these cases it appears in the formulas that the sacrificer makes the deities simply witness to his declaration of hostile actions against his foes.

The priest or the sacrificer proclaim through certain formulas that he puts the enemy in the jaws of some deities or rather supernatural creatures or beasts which are praised in the same formulas. In these rites the sacrificial objects which are used are thought to be representatives of the enemy and the deities or some other creatures help him in destroying the enemy. For example, five bricks called *codāh* (*pañcacadāh*) are to be put over the *nākasad* bricks in the fifth layer of the fire altar at the time of the fire-building rite. The priest at that time utters five formulas in which the names of superhuman beings, their apsares, servants and their weapons such as wizard, *Rakṣases*, beasts, serpents etc. are mentioned. An additional formula is to be uttered after each of these five formulas. This additional formula is – ‘to them homage, be they gracious to us; him whom we hate and who hates us, I place in your jaws’ (TS.4.4.3.2-3; MS.2.8.10; KS.17.9; KapS.26.8; VS.15.15-19). In a special case when a person for his safety is instructed to pile up one layer only and put five bricks on the high altar, the priest who actually places the bricks on the high altar for the sacrificer has to utter five formulas called *adhipatnīs*. In these five formulas the bricks are addressed and praised as the uniters, fore-thinkers, upholders and supports of the deities like *Agni*, *Soma*, *Sūrya*, *Indra*, *Mitra* and *Varuṇa* etc. An additional formula is attached to these five formulas and that is – ‘these are thine overlords,



to them honour, be they gracious to us; him whom we hate and who hates us, I place in your jaws' (TS.4.4.11.3; KS.22.2). In these two rites the placing of the bricks symbolises the placing of the enemies inside the jaws of the evil beings or deities mentioned in the formulas. At the time of six serpent offerings (in the course of the fire building rite) the priest utters six formulas addressing six different quarters along with their presiding deities. The last portion of all the formulas is one and the same, viz. 'him whom we hate and who hates us I place within the jaws of you two'. (TS.5.5.10.1-2; MS.2.13.21; ĀpŚS.17.20.14; BŚS.10.49; MŚS.6.2.6.23). After the serpent offerings there are six great offerings (or '*gandharvāhutis*' as mentioned in BŚS.10.50) to be offered accompanied with six different formulas in which some superhuman powers are addressed. These powers have their residences in different quarters. The concluding part of every formula is as follows - 'be you gentle to us, him whom we hate and who hates us, I put in your jaws', (TS.5.5.10.3-4; ĀpŚS.17.20.15; BŚS.10.50). After the *śatarudrīya* rite the *avatāna* offerings are to be offered (at the time of the fire-building rite). Then the sacrificer pays homage to Rudra uttering three formulas of which the last portion in each case is as follows - 'to them homage, be they merciful to us; him whom we hate and who hates us, I place him within your jaws', (TS.4.5.11.2; MS.2.9.9; KS.17.16; KapS.27.6; VS.16.64-66).

Independent of any deity the priest or the sacrificer declares through certain formulas to nullify the evil plot of the enemy or to eradicate the enemy by means of his ritual activities. It is well understood here that he derives this power to do so from his learning of the sacred texts, his continuous religious practices and his austerities performed during his learning and practise all together. Thus he considers himself powerful enough to independently deal with the enemies without seeking any help from or praying for the same to the gods. For example, the priest in a soma-sacrifice has to dig four sounding holes he utters - 'here do I



cast out the spell which an equal or an unequal has buried against us, here do I overthrow him who being equal or unequal is ill-disposed to us' (TS.1.3.2.1; MS.1.2.10; KS.2.11; KapS.2.5; VS.5.23; ŚB.3.5.4.10-13; BŚS.6.28; ĀpŚS.11.11.8; BhŚS.12.11.8; MŚS.2.2.3.7)25. The word *valaga* in this formula means some buried blackmagical substances which are thought to be used or practised by an enemy. It is hoped here that this magical substance can be destroyed by means of digging out the same.<sup>26</sup> While paying reverence to the Sun-god in the N. and FM. sacrifices the sacrificer utters –'here do I exclude my enemy N. N. from the quarters, this sky, this atmosphere, this earth, this food, excluded is he whom we hate'. (TS.1.6.6.1; ĀpŚS.4.15.3; BhŚS.4.20.8; BŚS.3.21.22).<sup>27</sup>

In some other cases one finds that some new words which are not found in the original yajus texts are to be uttered if one desires to practise blackmagic. In these the priest has to avoid the original formulas prescribed for the normal performances. When the preparation for the altar of the N. and FM. sacrifices goes on the priest has to fling the wooden sword in to the rubbish heap and utter the formula –'a killer of the enemy are thou...' (VS.1.28). But in case he wants to practise abhicāra then he should utter –'I fling you as a thunderbolt for so and so', (ŚB.1.2.5.22) which does not occur in the previous *mantra* text of the VS. Here ŚB.1.2.5.22 mentions that the wooden sword like a thunderbolt strike down the enemy. In the *pravargya* ceremony of a somasacrifice after heating the *pravargya* milk in the *mahāvīra* pot when the priest puts down the pot on the eastern mound the priest normally utters the formula mentioned in TA.5.8.6 –'thou art gharma...'. But, if he desires to practise abhicāra then he should utter 'I put down you on the life breath of N. N.; go futile with N. N., who hates us and whom we hate' (TA.5.8.7; ĀpŚS.15.11.4; BhŚS.11.11.4). In the *agnipranayana* ceremony (taking the fire forward) in a soma-sacrifice, the



priest after sprinkling the sprinkling water on the high-altar pours out the remnants of the sprinkling water on the place outside the south-east corner of the altar and utters –‘the burning water ...’ (VS.5.11). But, if the priest wants to practise abhicāra, then he is instructed to utter –‘the burning water I dismiss from the sacrifice against so and so’. This utterance is said to lead the priest to smite his foe with that heat (hot water) (ŚB.3.5.2.8).

There are cases where no original formula is prescribed by the texts. But in case blackmagic is to be performed some formulas are to be uttered. Thus in the morning pressing of a soma-sacrifice when the *upāṁśu* cup is to be offered normally there is no formula to be uttered by the priest. But if the priest wants to practise abhicāra he has to say just before the offering – ‘slay N.N., then only I sacrifice to you.’ According to TS.6.4.5.6, the deity of the silent offering desiring the oblation slays the person, (TS.6.4.5.6; BhŚS.13.11.15; ĀpŚS.12.11.7; HŚS.8.3.8). The formula in this example bears the imperative sense through which the performer commands the presiding deity of the silent offering to bring harm to the enemy. In the morning pressing of a soma-sacrifice the priest is instructed to put the *upāṁśu savanna* (the fifth pressing stone used in pressing the soma plants in order to prepare juice for the *upāṁśu graha*) in between the *upāṁśu* and *antaryāma* cups. If the priest wants to practise abhicāra he has to utter a formula while putting down the stone –‘I place you on the *vyāna* of N. N.’ (BhŚS.13.13.2). In the animal sacrifice of eleven victims when the priest lays down the twelfth post called *upaśaya* just to the south of the *agniṣṭha* post if he wants to practise abhicāra then he is instructed to utter –‘thus I lay down the thunderbolt of Indra on N. N. of the lineage such and such and the son of N. N.’ (MS.4.7.9; KS.29.8; ĀpŚS.14.6.12; HŚS.9.8.23). In the above two rites the formulas are in the



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to appropriate the metres and deities of his enemy (MS.4.7.7). After the completion of the fire altar the *vasordhārā* rite is performed. A section of formulas used at the time of this rite begins with – *Agniśca mā Indraśca me, Somaśca mā Indraśca me...* (MS.2.11.5). It is mentioned in MS.3.4.1 that the use of these formulas in this section helps the sacrificer to take away the sense organs and strength of his foe. It may be noted here that these formulas apparently do not contain any blackmagical elements. It is only on account of the statement to that effect in the MS. that they are connected with blackmagic.

Some expressions which are in the form of order given by the priest to another person are believed to be effective in a blackmagical sense. For instance, in the N. and FM. sacrifices the Adhvaryu priest gives an order to the Hotṛ priest saying –‘recite for Agni, as he is kindled (*agnaye samidhyamānāya anubṛhi*)’. By this utterance of Adhvaryu priest the sacrificer is said to overcome his enemy (TB.3.3.7.1). The same order is found in connection with the same in an animal sacrifice (TS.6.3.7.1). At the time of buying the soma-plants from the soma-seller the Adhvaryu priest says –‘O soma-seller, purify the Soma’. According to TS.6.1.9.1-2 this utterance of the priest leads the soma-seller to become hungry. The person who is appointed to sell the soma-stalks in a soma-sacrifice is a lower caste brahmin or even a *śūdra*. He is considered to be somewhat lower and evil and his role is like that of a scape-goat. Here the enemies are expected to be punished by the utterance mentioned above.

Some other formulas are also described to be blackmagically effective even though their meaning does not directly contain any such reference. A group of formulas called *daśahotṛ*<sup>28</sup> are described as harmful to the enemy. A special abhicāra rite can be performed with these formulas (KS.9.16; TB.2.2.1.7). A detailed description of this rite can be found from the ĀpŚS.14.13.13 to 14.14.1. Similarly the



*pañcahotr*<sup>29</sup> formulas having apparently no blackmagical connection can be used in abhicāra rites. It is mentioned in MS.1.9.6 that the priest should make the sacrificer (who has enemies) offer with the *pañcahotr* formulas. It is also said that the gods could subdue the Asuras with the help of these formulas and likewise the sacrificer with the help of these can subdue his rivals. Another set of formulas called *rāṣṭrabhṛt* mentioned in TS.3.4.7 are prescribed to be used in a rite of abhicāra. According to TS.3.4.8.5, the person who wants to practise abhicāra should offer six sets of oblations in a reverse order (cf. BŚS.14.18).

While uttering some formulas the priest at times is said to change the order of the utterances in order to practise blackmagic. For example, in the fire building rite (*Agni cayana*) during the ceremony of placing fire in the fire pan there is an offering to *Savītr* with the utterance of eight formulas, i.e. seven verses and a *yajus* formula. The usual procedure is to utter the seven verses first and lastly to utter the *yajus* formula. But, if the priest desires to confer the glory of the sacrifice on the metres (instead of the sacrificer) then he is instructed to make one verse last. That is, he first utters six verses, then utters the *yajus* and lastly utters the seventh verse (TS.5.1.3; ĀpŚS.16.1.6; HŚS.11.1.9). According to MS.3.1.1 and MŚS.6.1.1.6 if the priest wants to confer the glory upon the sacrifice itself (instead of the sacrificer) then he should follow the above instruction. However, it is mentioned in KS.18.19 and KapS.29.7 that if the priest wants to bestow the glory of the sacrifice on the deities (instead of the sacrificer) then he should follow this instruction. In all these cases, the priest with an intention to debar the sacrificer from obtaining the glory of his sacrifice changes the order of the utterances. In the N. and FM. sacrifices when the priest invokes *idā* (the portion cut off from all the oblation materials) he has to utter the formula – '*idā* is invoked (*idopahūtā*)...' (MS.4.13.5; KS.27.5; TB.3.5.8.2 and 3.5.13.2). If the priest wants to make the



sacrificer devoid of cattle, then there is an instruction for the priest to invoke *iḍā* indirectly. That means, instead of starting the formula with *iḍopahūtā* or '*iḍā* is invoked', he should start with '*upahūteḍā*' or 'invoked is *iḍā*... etc.' This *iḍā* is identified with cattle. Therefore, changing the order of utterances of the formula to *iḍā* the priest is supposed to make the sacrificer deprive of his cattle (TS.1.7.1.3; ĀpŚS.24.14.16; HŚS.21.2.56).

With an intention to nullify somebody's blackmagic or to counteract the same, one finds some formulas to be uttered. Thus in the N. and FM. sacrifice there are five *prayāja* offerings to be offered. At the end of these offerings the sacrificer is instructed to utter some formulas against a person who wants to imprecate evil on the sacrificer at the fore, middle and the later part of the sacrifice. If someone were to imprecate evil on him at the fore part of the main sacrifice then the sacrificer should utter – 'thou shall suffer from some disease of the face, thou shall become either blind or deaf'. If he feels anybody imprecates evil on him at the middle of his sacrifice, then he should utter – 'thou shall be without offering, without cattle'. If anyone imprecates him at the end of the sacrifice then he has to utter – 'unstable and poor, thou shall swiftly go to yonder world' (ŚB.1.6.1.16-18). Similarly, there is an occasion for the priest to counter curse a person who wants to curse him while he recites the eleven kindling verses at the time of the fire-kindling-rite in the N. and FM. sacrifices. If somebody curses the priest while he recites the first kindling verse then the priest is instructed to utter a formula at the end of the recitation of that verse. The formula is – 'Thereby thou hast put thine own out-breathing in to the fire, by that out breathing of thine shall thou undergo suffering'. If anyone is to curse him while he recites the second kindling verse then the priest should utter the same formula with reference to the suffering of the curser through his inbreathing. And likewise, the priest utters some other similar formulas



mentioning the sufferings of the curser through some of his physical and mental organs if the priest feels that some one has cursed him during his recitation of other kindling verses (ŚB.1.4.3.11.21). These utterances are not only able to bar the harms caused by evil practioners and cursers but they are also thought to impose harms on the evil doers and cursers.

On the basis of above illustrations about the yajus formulas one can note the following points. There is no clear distinction between the nature of the formulas uttered against the invisible enemies like evil-spirits and those against the human enemies. Many times the name of the enemy is to be uttered in the formulas. Some formulas are found to be used against both types of enemies. Most of these formulas are given in the form of proclamatory sentences indicating a direct attack on the enemies by the performers. Various deities are requested to kill or bring harm to the enemies. In some cases the performer declares that he himself destroys the enemies and thus requires no help from any god. It is significant to note that the meaning of some formulas has no connection with the harmful rituals. Such formulas are to be used only because these are prescribed to be used inspite of their harmlessness.

### (C) Chanting of *Sāmans*, *Stomas* and *Viṣṭutis* etc.

The third type of verbal rites consists of chanting of the *sāmans* and other Vedic musical elements like *stomas* and *viṣṭutis*. The word *sāman* means a melody. Always a *sāman* is set to *ṛcs* and is considered to be a *mantra*<sup>30</sup>. It is believed that *sāmans* are endowed with some mystic powers for which they are often called *rahasya* (secret or mysterious)<sup>31</sup>. These are generally chanted in Soma-sacrifices. The purpose of chanting *sāman* is manifold and it is explained in details by the texts like JB, TMB, AB etc. These are mainly used in order to get progeny, cattle, food and heavenly life etc.<sup>32</sup>



Traditionally the *sāmans* are regarded as the source of Indian music<sup>33</sup>. Being chanted in ritual performances these are thought to bring some magical results<sup>34</sup>. One also finds from the Vedic textual sources that the *sāmans* possess some anti-evil beings power in themselves. For instance, one reads in TS.6.6.3.1. '*sāman* is a slayer of Rakṣas'. It is mentioned in ŚB.14.3.1.10 and 4.4.5.6 that *sāman* is a repeller of fiends and Rakṣases. A particular *sāman* called *Hārivarṇa* is said to be meant for killing Rakṣases. (JB.1.183; TMB.5.9.5). They are also considered to be the killer of enemies. A number of *sāmans* are found to be designated as 'the killer of the enemy' (*bhrātṛvyaḥ*). For example, the *śaiśava sāman* (JB.3.102) *gauṅgava sāman* (JB.3.185), *vaiyaśva sāman* (JB.3.221), *saumitra sāman* (JB.3.132), *mahāvaiśvāmitra sāman* (JB.3.134) and *āsu sāman* (JB.3.211) are called the killers of enemy in the respective texts. This leads one to conclude that according to the Vedic people *sāmans* possess blackmagical utility. In the above mentioned Brāhmaṇa texts of various schools one finds the details in this regard.

There is a general tendency in the Brāhmaṇa texts to narrate stories in order to support their arguments.<sup>35</sup> While dealing with *sāmans* also these texts narrate stories and give information about the origin of some *sāmans*, etymology of their names and their previous use. These stories are useful in knowing the considerations of the Vedic texts about *sāmans*. In the following lines an attempt is made to study the use of *sāmans* in various blackmagical rites and to trace out their nature with the help of the stories told about them in the texts.

The names of some *sāmans*, at times, indicate how they are harmful to the enemies. It is interesting to note the etymologies of these names from this point of view. For example, there is a period of six soma-days called *prṣṭhya śaḍaha* in a twelve days Soma sacrifice. At the midday *pavamāna* laud of the third day of this six day period a *sāman* namely *paurumudga* (in TMB 12.3.12 it is called *paurumadga*)



is to be applied. Two different stories are mentioned in JB.3.43 and TMB.12.3.14 showing its use along with the etymology of the word or the name '*paurumudga*'. The gods and Asuras were contending on the sea. The gods wanted to make the Asuras drawn in the water. They chanted this *sāman* and the Asuras were drawn in the sea. As the gods made the Asuras drawn earlier (*pūrve amajjayan*) the name of the *sāman* became *paurumadga* (JB.3.43). The story is different in TMB.12.3.14, while contending with Asuras the gods destroyed (or made to sink) the boroughs of Asuras ('*puromajjayan*') by means of the *sāman* and that is why it is called '*paurumadga*'. In both the stories the *sāman* is mentioned to be used by the gods against their enemies. However, in JB.3.43 it is called as *bhrātr̥vyahā* and *rakṣohā* where as in TMB.12.3.14 it is mentioned that the sacrificer by chanting this *sāman* in his sacrifice can destroy his rival. The *satrāsāhīya* *sāman* is to be applied in the *uktha laud* of the third day in the *pr̥sthya ṣaḍaha* of a twelve day sacrifice. It is meant for a sacrificer who has conquered his enemies partially and wants to conquer them fully (JB.1.182). According to TMB.12.9.20, the *sāman* is to be applied in the midday *pavamāna* laud of the fourth day in the *pr̥sthyasāḍaha* of the twelve day sacrifice. The sacrificer who lauds with this *sāman* is said to conquer his rival finally (TMB.12.9.22). Both the texts give the stories denoting the etymology of the name '*satrāsāhīya*'. Thus in JB.1.182 the story runs as follows – 'Indra conquered the Asuras but some of them he could not conquer. He wished to conquer all the Asuras and lauded with this *sāman* and conquered them all.' As he conquered (*asahata*) finally (*satrā*) all the Asuras (by means of this *sāman*) it is called *satrāsāhīya*. One finds the story in TMB.12.9.21 differently – 'what had been left unconquered of the possessions of the Asuras by the gods that was conquered by means of this *sāman*. Because the gods then said 'we have conquered them finally' (*satrinānasakṣaṇānti*) therefore, the *satrāsāhīya* *sāman* is called



thus. In a twelve day sacrifice the *sāman* called *gauṅgava* is used in the midday *pavamāna* laud of the seventh day performances (TMB.14.3.18). One finds two etymological stories given in JB.3.185 showing the use of this *sāman*. According to one, while contending over cattle with gods the Asuras went towards the sea with all their cattle. But the gods wishing to win over cattle from the Asuras chanted this *sāman* and thereby won the cattle from them. Then the gods uttered – ‘we had won over each cow of the Asuras’ (*gāṅgānīwāvāsuraṇām avṛkṣmahīti*). Therefore, this *sāman* is called thus. According to another story gods after killing the Asuras with this *sāman* made a noise called ‘*gaṅgaṇi*’ (*ghoṣamgaṅgaṇim*). This is why this *sāman* is called *gauṅgava* and designated as the killer of enemy (*bhrātṛvyahā*) (JB.3.185). Similarly, regarding the *nānada sāman* which is to be applied in the sixteenth laud of the fourth day in the *prṣṭhya śaḍaha* of a twelve days sacrifice one finds a story showing the etymology of the name in TMB.12.13.4. This *sāman* is composed on the *anuṣṭubh* verse, i.e. SV.1.352. The story is as follows – Indra, saying ‘I will kill Vṛtra’, resorted to Prajapati. Prajapati gave him this *anuṣṭubh* verse which is devoid of energy. By means of this verse Indra could not vanquish Vṛtra and unvanquished Vṛtra roared (*vyanadat*). Therefore, the *sāman* is called *nānada*. The story is given in JB.3.80 differently. Indra, with the help of this *sāman* killed Vṛtra while the latter was shouting (*nānadyamānam*). Still in another context another story is given on this *sāman* prescribed to be used in the sixteenth laud of the soma-sacrifice of *śoḍaśin* type and there it is called as ‘the killer of the enemy’ (*bhrātṛvyahā*). It is narrated thus – ‘Vṛtra was shouting while being killed by Indra and therefore, the *sāman* is called *nānada*.’ (AB.4.2). This *sāman* is also found to be chanted along with other two *sāmans* namely *sabha* and *aupagava* in the midday and *ārbhavapavamāna* lauds of the *Śyena* sacrifice meant for *abhicāra* (ŚaḍVBr.4.2.15). In this context all these three



*sāmans* are considered to be endowed with some malignant powers (*krūrāṇi sāmāni*). This *sāman* is again to be used in the two above mentioned *pavamāna* lauds of the *saṁdamaśa* sacrifice meant for the same purpose (ṢaḍVB.4.4.8). One finds the *abhīvarta sāman* prescribed as the Brahman's chant in the third *prṣṭha* laud of the midday service (corresponding to the *śāstra* of *Brāhmaṇāchamsin*) in the *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice of a sacrificer who has rivals (TMB.8.2.7). A story showing the etymology of the term *abhīvarta* is given in TMB.8.2.8 that the gods by means of this *sāman* turned themselves against the Asuras (*abhyavartanta*). The reason for this *sāman* to be used in the Brahman's chant is that there by the sacrificer turned himself against his rival. Moreover, this *sāman* is prescribed to be used in the Brahman's chant of all the *abhicāra* sacrifices excepting the *iṣu* sacrifice (in which the *Brhatsāman* serves the purpose) (ŚSS.14.22.8). Another *sāman* called *saptaha* is prescribed for the fourth chant of the midday *pavamāna* laud of *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice and its origin is narrated in a story given in JB.1.152 which gives the etymology of its name also. Jamadagni, the seer was the house chaplain of the *Māhenas* (a particular race). He made the Mahenas bountiful (by means of his priestly skills) but they wanted to make him ruin. Then Jamadagni desired to kill all their cattle seven by seven per day (*sapta saptaikāhani grāmyāṇām hanyām*). He saw this *sāman*, chanted it and there by he could kill their cattle seven by seven per day. On account of this the *sāman* is called '*jamadagnessaptāha*'. This *sāman* is also called as *bhrātṛvayahā*. It is further mentioned that the sacrificer who wants to practise *abhicāra* or who has a rival should make use of this *sāman*. In the case of all the above mentioned *sāmans* one finds that their names are supposed to be mystically connected with blackmagical results and that the etymologies play an important role here.

In the stories connected with some other *sāmans* the etymologies or their names are given and gods are said to have used these *sāmans* against their enemies, i.e. the Asuras.



Thus in the fourth *prṣṭha* laud of the midday service of the *Agniṣṭoma* sacrifice the *Kāleya sāman* is to be chanted according to JB.1.153 and TMB.8.3.1. The stories given in these texts are slightly different from each other but the etymologies are almost same. According to JB.1.153 the gods and Asuras were contending for the sacrifice. The gods thrust Asuras from the *Bahiṣpavamāna*, then the Asuras turned towards the *ājya*. In this way both the parties turned towards different aspects of soma-sacrifice and lastly the Asuras turned towards the *Kāleya sāman*. At this point the gods got the Asuras and with the help of this *sāman* they drove away the Asuras (*akālayanta*). That is why it is called *kāleya*. According to TMB.8.3.1, the gods while contending with Asuras for the possession of these worlds resorted to Prajapati. He gave them this *sāman* saying – ‘by means of this *sāman* you will be able to drive them away.’ And accordingly the gods drove away the Asuras by means of the same (*akālayanta*). Therefore, the name of the *sāman* is ‘*kāleya*’. Another *sāman* namely *sañjaya* is said to be applied in the *uktha* laud of the fifth day in the *prṣṭhya ṣaḍaha* of the twelve day soma-sacrifice (JB.3.132; TMB.13.6.6). In both the texts one finds stories giving etymologies of the word *sañjaya* and the use of the *sāman* by gods against the Asuras. While contending with the Asuras the gods had used this *sāman* and conquered their enemies (*samajayan*) on account of which it is called ‘*sañjaya*’. In the midday *pavamāna* laud of the eighth day in the twelve day sacrifice the *pauru-hanman sāman* is prescribed to be used (JB.3.215). The story giving etymology of the word ‘*pauruhanman*’ is as follows – the gods and the Asuras were contending. The gods wished – ‘may we kill the Asuras first’, and by chanting this *sāman* they killed the Asuras first. Hence the name of the *sāman* is *pauruhanman*, i.e. which kills first. The name of the above mentioned *sāmans* are important from the blackmagical point of view and the stories are significant as far as the etymology of their names are concerned.



Some *sāmans* are found to be named after some seers or mythological persons who are said to have used these *sāmans* for the sake of bringing harms on others. For example, the *vaiyaśva sāman* is to be applied in the *pr̥ṣṭha* laud of the eighth day of the twelve day sacrifice (JB.3.221). An interesting story is given on the origin of this *sāman* – When Vyaśva, the son of Sākamaśva was still in the womb of his mother his paternal uncle Gaya could know about him that he (Vyaśva) was going to be born as a seer. After his birth his uncle gave order to his servants to expose him. While they were doing so the shadow did not leave the exposed infant and his two thumbs procured him the mother's milk. The servants informed Gaya about this. Then Gaya took his club and went to slay this infant. Vyaśva, at that time wished 'may I get out of this and find deliverance and assistance'. He saw this *sāman* and chanted. There upon the club of Gaya fell back and his head split up. Hence the *sāman* is called 'the killer of enemy *'bhrātṛvyahā'*. In ṢaḍvBr.4.4.6 this *sāman* is prescribed to be applied as the fourth *sāman* in the midday *pavamāna* laud of the abhicāra sacrifice called *saṁdamaśa*. JB.3.132 and TMB.13.6.8 prescribe the *saumitra sāman* to be applied in the *uktha* laud of the fifth day in the twelve day sacrifice. In JB.3.210 and TMB.14.9.13 it is prescribed to be used in the midday *pavamāna* laud of the eighth day in the twelve day sacrifice. In both the places of the text of JB. the *sāman* is described as *bhrātṛvyahā'*. The origin of this *sāman* is found in a story narrated in JB.1.163 from which one comes to know that this *sāman* was used in killing a female Asura called Dīrghajihvī<sup>36</sup>. Dīrghajihvī was licking up all the soma-juices from the sacrificial places with the help of her long tongue. Indra wishing to seize her could not succeed. He asked Sumitra, the son of Kutsa, who was a handsome youngman to go to her and make her chat with him. When Sumitra asked her to make love with him she disagreed saying that he had only one penis where as she had cunnus



on each of her member and that did not tally. Then Indra made one penis on each member of Sumitra. When Sumitra went to her again she gave her consent to lay down with him. As soon as Sumitra obtained his desire fulfilled with her he laid hold of her and chanted this *sāman*. There by Indra came to them and slew her. Being chanted by Simitra it is called *Saumitra* (JB.1.163). In the *Uktha* laud of the fifth day in the twelve day sacrifice the *sāman* called *mahāviśvāmitra* is to be used (JB.3.134). Showing its origin a story is given thus – Indra wishing to kill Vṛtra ran to Viśvāmitra and asked him to tell a means with which he could kill Vṛtra. Then Viśvāmitra chanted this *sāman* and afterwards Indra could kill Vṛtra. Indra said (to himself) that this *sāman* is the greatness of Viśvāmitra and therefore, it is called *mahāviśvāmitra*. As the *sāman* helped in killing Vṛtra it is described as ‘the killer of the enemy’ (*bhrātṛvyahā*). The *vaiśvamanas sāman* is also called the killer of enemy and killer of Raksas in JB.3.267. A story is narrated in this text which does not differ much from TMB.15.5.20 and shows the origin of this *sāman*. The seer called Viśvamanas had once gone out to collect fuel in the forest and was seized by a Raksas. Wishing to repel the Rakṣas he chanted this *sāman*. Indra then came to him and directed him to pull out a blade of grass. He did so and Indra poured his thunderbolt in to the grass. Then the seer threw the grass at the Rakṣas and killed him. This is the reason for calling this *sāman* as *rakṣohā* and *bhrātṛvyahā*. Another *sāman* namely *Kārtaveśa* is called as fortune (*śriḥ*) as well as the ‘*bhrātṛvyahā*’ or killer of the enemy. It is to be applied in the *ārbhava-pavamāna* laud of the seventh day in the twelve day sacrifice (JB.3.196 and TMB.14.5.21). The name of this *sāman* is derived from the name of a king called Kṛtaveśa. He got some landed property of some other kings by chanting this *sāman*. This information one gets from a story narrated in JB.3.196.

Still there are some other *sāmans* which are found to be



described as *bhrātṛvyahā* but their names are not derived from the names of any seer or any other person. One has to use the *adārasṛt sāmān* in the midday *pavamāna* laud of the ninth day of a twelve day sacrifice. The seer Bharadvāja had chanted this *sāmān* for the king *Kṣatra* the son of *Pratardana* in order to make him win over his rivals in a battle. When this *sāmān* was sung *Indra* come to help the king and the latter could conquer his enemies (JB.3.248). This *sāmān* is called *vijitīḥ* (conquering) as well as *bhrātṛvyahā* or killer of enemies. There is another *sāmān* namely *śaiśava* to be applied in the midday *pavamāna* laud of the fifth day in a twelve day sacrifice according to JB.3.102. According to this text *Indra* killed *Vṛtra* by means of this *sāmān* and therefore it is described as *bhrātṛvyahā*. In a twelve day sacrifice one has to apply *āśu sāmān* in the midday *pavamāna* laud of the eighth day (JB.3.211). The seer *Bhṛgu* chanted this *sāmān* in favour of the gods for making them victorious over the *Asuras*. It is also called the killer of enemies as it enabled the gods to conquer the *Asuras*. Similarly, The *daivānīka sāmān* is described as *vijitīḥ* – as well as *bhrātṛvyahā*. After chanting this *sāmān* the gods could conquer the *Asuras*. This is to be used in the *uktha* laud of the ninth day in a twelve day sacrifice (JB.3.275).

*Nidhana* or 'finale' forms the fifth part, i.e. the last part of a *sāmān*. On account of some finales described to be harmful, their respective *sāmāns* can be used against one's enemies and thereby the *nidhanas* play an important role in blackmagical music. The ritual texts narrate certain stories showing the blackmagical power of *nidhanas* of some *sāmāns*. At times *nidhanas* are described to be identical with weapons. Moreover, change of *nidhanas* in a *sāmān* causes change in the desired results for which a *sāmān* is chanted<sup>37</sup>. Thus for example, in the *prṣṭha* laud of the seventh day in the twelve day sacrifice the *kāṇva sāmān* with 'abhi' as its finale is to be applied (TMB.14.4.4). *Indra* hurled his thunderbolt at *Vṛtra* and slew him by means of this *sāmān* having 'abhi' as its



*nidhana*. The sacrificer who applies this *sāman* along with its finale is said to be able to slay his rival (TMB.14.4.5). One finds the story more elaborately in JB.3.189, - Indra wishing to slay Vṛtra called on Kaṇva, the seer to assist him. Kaṇva saw this *sāman* and chanted it and then only Indra could slay his foe. The word 'abhi' ('on to') is used as the finale of this *sāman* and Indra with this finale called over the thunderbolt and killed Vṛtra. The story here suggests how the finale of a *sāman* has blackmagical power. Here the *nidhana* 'abhi' is identical with thunderbolt<sup>38</sup>. For the Hotṛ's *prṣṭha* laud in the third day of the twelve day sacrifice the *vairūpa sāman* is to be applied according to JB.3.48 and TMB.12.4.5. It has five finales. The fourth finale contains the word 'aśva'. A statement is found in JB.3.49 that the *sāman* with *aśva* as its finale is meant for removing the rival. A story preceeds this statement and mentions that whatever shape the gods assumed the Asuras also assumed that shape. The gods assumed the shape of horses which the Asuras could not. Then the gods became victorious and the Asuras were defeated. This story shows the blackmagical power of the word *aśva* as the finale of the *Vairūpa sāman*. Moreover, the first finale of this *sāman* is *diśam* (quarter) which is said to be meant for repelling the rivals (TMB.12.4.10). In the course of the discussion about the *sāmans* in the third *prṣṭha* laud (the Brahman's chant) of a soma-sacrifice, it is said in TMB.8.1.1 that, if an abhicāra type of sacrifice is to be performed then one has to use the *sākāranidhana kāṇva sāman* with the finale *vaṣaṭ* instead of the usual finale 'ās'. In the same sacrifice at the midday *pavamāna* laud this *sāman* should be used with the finale 'abhi' (on to) instead of 'ās'. According to TMB.8.1.2 the word *vaṣaṭ* is identical with gods arrow and the word *abhi* is said to be thunderbolt. From these statements it is suggested that these two finales are to be used in the said *sāman* with an intention to get some blackmagical results. Similarly, the *Gāyatra sāman* is to be used in the out of door's laud of a Soma sacrifice. The regular finale of the *sāman* is



'ā'. But for the different desires of the sacrificer the finale is to be changed. For a sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra TMB.7.1.11 prescribes the word *han̥si* (hurt) as the finale of the *sāman*. This word is derived from the root 'han' (to kill) which bears the sense of hostility in itself. The *Hārivarṇa sāman* is said to be meant for repelling the Raksases (TMB.8.9.5). Through a story the evil-eradicating nature of its three finales is mentioned. The Asuras were in this worlds previously. The gods, with help of three finales of this *sāman*, i.e. 1) the golden splendor (*hariśriyam*), 2) thou shinest (*virājasi*) and 3) for day and day (*divedive*), repelled them from this world, from the intermediate region and from the heaven respectively. JB.1.183 prescribes this *sāman* as the Brahman's chant in a Soma-sacrifice and narrates a similar story showing the inimical power of its three finales.

Some *sāmans* are identical with thunderbolt or believed to have the quality of the same. For example, the *Rathantara sāman* being used as the *pr̥ṣṭha sāman* in the *manustoma* sacrifice (meant for the practise of abhicāra) is said to be identical with thunderbolt (JB.3.169). The Vedic ritualists prescribe this *sāman* to be used as a *pr̥ṣṭha sāman* in the *Śyena* sacrifice (meant for abhicāra because, it is identical with the thunderbolt (ṢaḍVBr.4.2.10-11). In the midday *pavamāna* laud of the *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice the *yaudhājaya sāman* is to be applied (TMB.7.5.12). Here, Indra is said to have seized upon this *sāman*. So it is said to become the thunderbolt. The *abhūvarta sāman* is used in the third *pr̥ṣṭha* laud of the tenth day in a twelve day sacrifice according to JB.3.294. This is called a thunderbolt by using which the sacrificer can smite his rivals. For the *uktha* laud of the third day in the *pr̥ṣṭhya ṣaḍaha* of a twelve day sacrifice the *praman̥hiṣṭhīya sāman* is to be applied in case the sacrificer has a rival, so that he can cast down his rival and himself fares better (TMB.12.6.6). Indra hurled his thunderbolt at Vṛtra by means of this *sāman* and cast down



him. Therefore, the *sāman* is believed to have the quality of thunderbolt.

There are some other miscellaneous *sāmans* found to be used in various abhicāra rites. For example, the *sāman* called *sabha* (according to TMB.8.5.6, it is *sapha*) is to be applied in the *ārbhava pavamāna* laud of the *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice (JB.1.160). It is said that by means of this *sāman* the gods possessed themselves the power, valour, splendor, strength, cattle and food of the Asuras. According to ṢaḍVBr.4.2.15 this *sāman* is to be used in the midday as well as the *ārbhavapavamāna* lauds of the *Śyena* sacrifice in order to destroy the rivals. In the occasion of *saṁsava* (a confusion in the Soma-sacrifice due to simultaneous performances in vicinity by two rival performers) one who wants to defeat his rival has to apply four *sāmans* namely *ābhīkam*, *abhīnidhanam*, *abhīvartam* and *ābhīsavam* (JB.1.344). The text considers these *sāmans* as personified victories (*abhibhutyairūpam*). So the purpose of using these *sāmans* is to subdue the rival performer. From the blackmagical point of view the word or rather prefix 'abhi' (common to the names of all these four *sāmans*) which means 'on to' or sometimes 'against' has some importance.<sup>39</sup> In *saṁsava* an ambitious sacrificer should use other two *sāmans* called *Bṛhat* and *Rathantara*. These two are identical with heaven and earth respectively. Using these two *sāmans* the sacrificer is said to drive away his rival sacrificer from these two worlds (JB.1.343). According to TS.3.1.7.2-3, *Rathantara* is 'to day' and *Bṛhat* is 'tomorrow', the former is 'past' and latter is 'future' and likewise these are said to be measured and unmeasured respectively. By using these the sacrificer cuts off his rival from all these (today and tomorrow etc.). In the *Śyena* sacrifice also these two *sāmans* are used in the *prṣṭha* lauds, *Rathantara* at the first *prṣṭha* laud of the *Hotṛ* priest and *Bṛhat* at the third *prṣṭha* laud as the *Brāhmasāma*. There by the sacrificer hurls thunderbolt at his enemy (ṢaḍVBr.4.2.9): Here *Bṛhat* is called *kṣatra*, the rulling power



and *Rathantara*, the cattle. Using them in the said process the sacrificer causes the rulling power of his rival to kill the cattle of his rival (ṢaḍVBr.4.2.13). Thus these two *sāmans* are believed to have the power of bringing malevolent results to the enemy.

In case of the *sāmans* discussed above, it seems that, '*bhrātr̥vyahā*' is a common description of the *sāmans* having blackmagical power. Some are believed to be effective against Raksases as well as other human enemies for which these are designated as *rakṣohā* and *bhrātr̥vyahā* simultaneously. In many cases one finds the same common story of the conflict between the gods and Asuras in which ultimately the gods are said to become victorious by means of the *sāmans*. Sometimes the *nidhanas* make the *sāmans* blackmagical. In this context it is needless to repeat the fact that the *sāmans* are a part of Vedic *mantras* which are only in the form of tunes to be attached to some Vedic stanzas necessarily metrical for the purpose of singing during the sacrificial performances. These are very much unlike other two types of *mantras* namely *ṛks* and *yajus* formulas which are in the form of Vedic texts versified and prosaic respectively. In case of these two types of *mantras* sometimes their constituent texts contain references to harms or convey the meaning similar to hostility from which one can directly trace their blackmagical connection. But in case of the former, i.e. the *sāmans* no such sense can be drawn from their forms consisting of only tunes. Therefore, whatever description found on these musical *mantras* in some later texts like *Brāhmaṇas* etc. only from such descriptions one can trace out their connection with blackmagic. In other words, one gets information of their harmful character only from an indirect description from the *Brāhmaṇa* texts unlike the *ṛks* and *yajus* *mantras* on which their blackmagical character at times can be traced directly from their constituent texts and indirectly from later descriptions as well. Regarding the harmfulness of the *sāmans* one gets description variously from the



*Brāhmaṇa* texts, such as description about their origin, etymology of their names, their previous uses for such harmful purposes etc. Sometimes these are considered harmful only because of few words or terms occurring in the stanzas on which the *sāmans* are applied which are described harmful. One notices a similar case in connection with blackmagical *stomas* and *viṣṭutis* which are again nothing but some other aspects of Vedic music closely connected with *sāmans*. In other words the *stomas* and *viṣṭutis* are simply the methods of singing the *sāmans* which do not consist of any text as such from which their direct connection with blackmagic can be found. Only from the descriptions given in the *Brāhmaṇa* texts about some of these methods of chanting one gets information about their inimical nature and their use in the Vedic rituals accordingly.

A *stoma* means a form of chanting the *stotras* (lauds) in which the verses of a *sāman* are increased by repetition to a certain number. Therefore, the *stomas* are always named after numbers, for example, *trivṛt stoma* (three fold or nine versed), *pañcadaśa stoma* (fifteen versed), *saptadaśa stoma* (seventeen versed) and so on.<sup>40</sup> Sometimes certain *stomas* are found to be blackmagically potent of which few examples are given below.

### Trivṛt stoma (three fold or nine versed)

All the *stotras* of an abhicāra sacrifice called *trivṛtdagnīṣṭoma* are to be lauded in the *trivṛt stoma* only. The reason is that this *stoma* is the quickest among all the *stomas* and it enables the sacrificer to kill his enemy as quickly as possible (ṢaḍVBr.4.3.6). In the *Śyena* sacrifice also this *stoma* is to be applied in all the *pavamāna* lauds, i.e. *bahiṣpavamāna*, *mādhyandinapavamāna* and *ārbhava pavamāna* and the purpose is the same as stated above (ṢaḍVBr.4.2.4-5). In context of the *saṁidamīśa* sacrifice (meant for abhicāra) the group of *stomas* used in it are said to amount mystically to the *trivṛt*



*stoma*<sup>41</sup>, (*trivṛtam stomam sampadyate*). Further it is mentioned that the *trivṛt stoma* is a thunderbolt<sup>42</sup>, with which the sacrificer kills the cattle of his rival (ṢaḍVBr.4.4.4-5).

### *Pañcadaśa stoma* (fifteen versed)

A one day soma sacrifice called *gostoma* (cow-*stoma*) should have the *pañcadaśa stoma* in its out of door's laud. This *stoma* is said to be a thunderbolt and using it at the 'front' of his sacrifice in the (*bahiṣpavamāna stotra*) the sacrificer vanquishes his rival (TMB.16.2.5). This *stoma* is identical with thunderbolt according to TMB.2.4.2. It is to be applied in all the stotras of the abhicāra sacrifice called *vajra*. Applying this the sacrificer is said to hurl the thunderbolt at his foe (ṢaḍVBr.4.5.2-3). The identification of this *stoma* with thunderbolt<sup>43</sup> appears to be due to its relation with Indra. Both of them viz. Indra and this *stoma* are said to have sprung forth from the breast of Prajāpati<sup>44</sup> and the thunderbolt is thought to be connected with Indra.

The *triṇava stoma* (twenty seven versed) is also said to be a thunderbolt<sup>45</sup> by using which the sacrificer can hurl thunderbolt at his foe and kill him (ṢaḍVBr.3.9.2).

*Viṣṭuti* is a technical term which stands for a kind of repetition of the verses of a *stoma* at the time of chanting. It has three rounds (*paryāyas*). The number and order of the verses in these three rounds differ from one *viṣṭuti* to the other even in the same *stoma*.<sup>46</sup> Some of these *viṣṭutis* are described to be harmful, the use of which is supposed to bring blackmagical results. Some of these are also said to be identical with arrow or thunderbolt.

One *viṣṭuti* namely *abhikrāmantī* or the 'stepping on' belongs to the seventeen versed – *stoma* (*saptadaśa stoma*). By means of this the gods have overcome the Asuras and similarly the sacrificer who uses this at the chanting of his sacrifice is said to overcome his rivals (TMB.2.7.2-3). If one



takes, for example, the letters a, b and c as the basic three verses (serially) of a *sāman* used in the seventeenversed-*stoma* then the schema of the above mentioned *viṣṭuti* will be as follows – *hum*<sup>47</sup> a a a b c (first round), *hum* a b b b c (second round), *hum* a b b b c c c (third round). This *viṣṭuti* is traditionally called *daśasaptā* (TMB.2.7.1). Another *viṣṭuti* of this *stoma* is traditionally known as *saptāsthītā* of which the schema is – *hum* a a a b b b c, *hum* a b c, *hum* a b b b c c c. The sacrificer who has a rival should apply this *viṣṭuti* in the chanting of his sacrifice. Thereby he is said to break his rival into pieces just like a person horrows with a horrow (*matya*) reposing on seven sharp-pointed (pins) (TMB.2.9.1-2). This *viṣṭuti* is again prescribed to be used by a sacrificer against whom abhicāra has been practised (*abhicarya-māṇāya*). It is mentioned in the text that the seventeen versed *stoma* is Prajāpati, by practising this *viṣṭuti* while chanting with this *stoma* the performer enters into the middle of Prajāpati, so that he would not be struck down by the practised abhicāra (TMB.2.10.5). As one notices here, this *viṣṭuti* is endowed with a twofold quality, i.e. defensive and offensive – The same *stoma* has another *viṣṭuti* called *bhastrā* (blowing-away). Its schema is *hum* a a a b b b c, *hum* a b b b c, *hum* a b c c c. The priest who chants the *stotras*, if at all he hates the sacrificer, then he is instructed to apply this *viṣṭuti* in his chanting. So that it will enable him to blow away the cattle of the sacrificer just like a blacksmith blows away with a pair of bellows having mouth directed downward. This is also known as *apakrāmantī* or stepping away *viṣṭuti*. The person who practises this in his chanting is said to fare worse (TMB.2.13.1-2). Still there is another *viṣṭuti* belonging to this *saptadaśa stoma* which is prescribed to be used by a sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra (ṢaḍVBr.3.7.1). Its schema is, *hum* a b c, *hum* a b b b c, *hum* a a a b b b c c c. This is identical with (the shape of) the thunderbolt because it is thought to be relatively thin at the back and thick at its striking point. He who praises



(chants) with this is said to slay his rival and himself becomes better (ṢaḍVBr.3.7.3-4).

Among the *viṣṭutis* of the nine-versed *stoma* there are two called *iṣu* or arrow of which the schemas are – (i) *hum a*, *hum b b b*, *hum c c c c c*, (ii) *hum a*, *hum a b c*, *hum a b c c c*. Thus one finds these two *viṣṭutis* have the same number of verses in their respective three rounds (*paryāyas*) but in their corresponding *paryāyas* they differ in the repetitions of various verses with only exception to their first *paryāyas*. The shape of the arrangement of verses in both of the *viṣṭutis* is like an arrow. By means of the single verse in the first round of each of the *viṣṭutis* the performer is said to connect or fix the arrow. The three verses in their second round are said to be arrow, bow and string respectively. Then with the five *stotrīyā* verses of their third round the performer is supposed to let the arrow fly. The person who uses these *viṣṭutis* is said to conquer his rivals and himself becomes better (ṢaḍVBr.3.5.3-4). Either of these two *viṣṭutis* is prescribed by ṢaḍVBr.4.3.2 to be used in the chanting of the *trivṛt stoma* in an abhicāra sacrifice called *trivṛdagniṣṭoma*. It is further mentioned in ṢaḍVBr.4.3.3 that the use of it in the above sacrifice causes the rival of the sacrificer to be struck by death prematurely and the sacrificer tears his rival to pieces before the end of his normal life span (ṢaḍVBr.4.3.3).

A sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra should apply a particular *viṣṭuti* on the *pañcadaśa stoma* according to ṢaḍVBr.3.6.2. This *viṣṭuti* is said to be identical with thunderbolt by means of which the sacrificer would be able to slay his rival (ṢaḍVBr.3.6.3). Its schema is – *hum a b c*, *hum a b c* and *hum a a a b b b c c c*. Like a thunderbolt the schema seems to be relatively thick at the striking point and thin at the other end (ṢaḍVBr.3.6.4-5).

Similarly a *viṣṭuti* of the twenty one-versed-*stoma* is to be used by a sacrificer if he desires to practise abhicāra. This *viṣṭuti* is said to be a thunderbolt and using it the sacrificer



can slay his rival. The arrangement of verses in its three rounds is said to be like a thunderbolt which is thick at the striking point and thin at the other point (ṢaḍVBr.3.8.1-3). Accordingly its schema is – *hum* a b c, *hum* a a a b b b c c c, *hum* a a a b b b c c c.

A special *viṣṭuti* of the twenty seven – versed *stoma* is prescribed to be applied by a sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra (ṢaḍVBr.3.9.1-2). Thereby he is supposed to slay his rival by means of this and the schema of this is – *hum* a a a b b b c c c, *hum* a a a b b b c c c, *hum* a a a b b b c c c.

Regarding the *stomas* and *viṣṭutis* discussed in the above lines one notices most of them are metaphorically described to be thunderbolt which was a very famous weapon of Indra used against his enemies by himself. Moreover it can be imagined from the above discussion that the practise of blackmagic had gone so deep into the mind of the Vedic people that not even the most technical aspects of the chanting in the sacrificial performances were free from the blackmagical influences. Rather the *sāmans* and their technic of chanting play the most dangerous role in this regard.

#### (D) Miscellaneous

In the earlier sections are given Ṛg Vedic and AtharvaVedic hymns, YajurVedic formulas and SamaVedic chants in sonnections with their use in blackmagical rites. There are a few miscellaneous factors associated with these three types of *mantras* and they are also significant from blackmagical point of view. Among these verbal utterances one finds the *vaṣaṭ* calls, the *vyāhṛtis*, the *him* or *hum* sounds, utterances of the name of the enemy etc. are noteworthy. At times, even, no recitation or utterance is also described to bring harmful results. Thus here it is proposed to deal with such miscellaneous elements.



The *vaṣaṭ* call is uttered by the priest at the end of the recitation of all the *yājyā* verses (offering verses). It is found to play an important role in blackmagical performances. In the N. and FM. sacrifices while the Hotṛ priest recites the *yājyā* verse for the *ājyabhāga* offerings he has to utter the *vaṣaṭ* call in a voice denoting anger (*apagūrya*). According to TS.2.6.2.5 this utterance leads to lay the foe of the sacrificer low. Such type of *vaṣaṭ* call which is made aloud and forcibly is said to be thunderbolt. He who makes such *vaṣaṭ* call is considered to hurl it as a missile at his rival who hates him in order to lay him low (AB.3.7; GB.2.3.3). At the end of *yājyā*, if the priest desires of a man (the sacrificer) 'may he be worse', then he is instructed to utter this call in a more depressed tone than the tone in which he recited the *yājyā* verse (AB.3.7; GB.2.3.3; ĀpŚS.24.14.5; HŚS.21.2.40). If he wants to make the sacrificer as he was before (not better) then he should utter it in the same tone used for the *yājyā* verse (AB.3.7; GB.2.3.3; ĀpŚS.24.14.5; HŚS.21.2.41). For a sacrificer who has an enemy the priest is advised to utter this call in a more raised tone than that of the *yājyā* verse (cf. AB.3.7; GB.2.3.3). These three types of *vaṣaṭ* call are called 'the empty' (*rikta*), the hider of the abode (*dhāmaccad*) and thunderbolt (*vajra*) respectively (AB.3.7; GB.2.3.3). Still according to another instruction the priest should utter '*oṣaṭ*' instead of '*vaṣaṭ*' in the sacrifice of a sacrificer whom the priest hates and thereby he is said to burn the sacrificer (*oṣati*) (ĀpŚS.24.14.10). In this context some other ritualists prescribe to utter this call as *vāṣaṭ* or *vauṣaṭ* or *vauṣāt* or *vākṣaṭ* or *vāukṣaṭ* or *vaukṣāt* instead of uttering it simply *vaṣaṭ* (ĀpŚS.24.14.11). (In usual practise it is uttered as '*vauṣaṭ*')

The *vyāhṛtis* (the utterance of *bhūr*, *bhuvah* and *svah*) are thought to be mysterious by nature. TB.1.1.5.1 mentions that these *vyāhṛtis* are the truth of speech (*vācaḥ satyam*) and he who knowing this practises abhicāra kills his enemy. These are also called *Brahman* (TS.1.6.10.1). In the N. and FM.



sacrifices if the priest desires to bestow the blessings of the sacrifice on the foe of the sacrificer then he is told to insert these *vyāhrtis* in the beginning of each of the *anuvākya* verses<sup>48</sup>. The *anuvākya* is said to have the foe of the sacrificer as its deity and by inserting these *vyāhrtis* the priest is supposed to bestow the blessings of the sacrifice on the foe (TS.1.6.10.4; BŚS.3.16).

Similarly, the utterance of the 'him' sound at the beginning of the recitation also can be blackmagical. At the beginning of the first verse of the kindling verses the priest is instructed to utter the 'him' sound three times in the N. and FM. sacrifices. This sound is said to be a threefold thunderbolt. This leads the priest to drive away the enemies of the sacrificer who hates him from these worlds. By this threefold thunderbolt the gods are also said to have driven away the Asuras from these three worlds (KB.3.2).

A very important feature of the verbal rites in general is that sometimes the performer has to utter the name of the enemy against whom blackmagic is to be performed. This utterance enables the performer to execute his power against the enemy whom he hates.<sup>49</sup> The name is considered to be a part of the person concerned. With the help of the name the contagious type of magic can be performed. In the consecration ceremony of a soma-sacrifice the consecrated sacrificer is expected to observe silence. But if he hates anybody he may utter the name of that hated person 'devouringly' as it were, i.e. he should mumble the name. Here the consecrated sacrificer is regarded as fire (*Agni*). By uttering the name of his foe he is supposed to burn him (KB.7.3).

In order to practise blackmagic a priest can, sometimes, avoid the necessary recitations or utterances which are obligatory in the normal performances. Omissions or lacunae are defects in the normal process. Whether intentional or nonintentional they are prone to cause harm or loss and such defects are utilized for causing harm to the enemies by the



performers of sacrificers. For example, in the concluding part of a soma-sacrifice the *samistayajus* offerings (or according to KS.29.3 *samsthitayajus*) are to be made with the utterances of nine formulas given in MS.1.3.38 (cf. TS.1.4.44). If the priest hates the sacrificer he should offer them without reciting any formula. By this he is supposed to separate the life breath of the sacrificer (MS.4.8.4). As a part of the *ājyaśāstra*, the priest has to recite the 'silence praise'. It is mentioned in AB.2.32 that if the priest desires of a man (the sacrificer) to make him homeless then he should not recite the silent praise in his sacrifice. Thereby the sacrificer is supposed to come to ruin along with the sacrifice which being without root falls to ruin. At the time of drawing the *marutvatīya graha*, the priest has to utter three formulas (mentioned in TS.1.4.17,18,19) in which the word 'marut' occurs. If the priest hates the sacrificer then according to KS.28.3, he should draw the cups without uttering the word 'marut'. In this case he has not to utter the formulas at all, 'Marut' is identical with strength and therefore, the priest who does not utter these formulas is said to debar the sacrificer from his strength (KS.28.3).

## Conclusion

From the study of the blackmagical use of *Ṛcs*, Atharva Vedic hymns, *Yajus* formulas and *Sāman* chants it appears that these are used many times against demons, evil spirits and human enemies. Thus the enemies were considered to be similar to demons and other evil beings as well. It also appears that 'speech' in any form was considered to be very effective and therefore, it was used against the evil beings or enemies in order to destroy them. Priests, sometimes, could use these as weapons against their patrons also if there were occasions of hatred between them. The identification of various forms of verbal utterances or recitations etc. with thunderbolt (*vajra*) indicates their destructive power. While some verbal utterances themselves



contain blackmagical elements, some of these are simply described to be harmful magically. Apart from these one also notices some of the devices applied to these utterances or recitations for the sake of blackmagic and these are – change in the sound of utterances (especially in the case of *vaṣaṭ* call), creation of confusion in the recitations of hymns and the utterance of *yajus* formulas, bringing change in the *nidhanas* while chanting *sāmans* and lastly avoidance of some verbal rites. In short, any departure from the normal way of recitation etc., if done intentionally, could be useful in harming or destroying one's enemies. In some recitations the desire of destroying the enemies is clearly mentioned while to some other it is mystically associated. Thus the discussion reveals the harmful aspect of the holy Vedic mantras in general.

### References

1. For the importance of verbal utterances in the magical rites see Webster H. *Magic, a Sociological Study*, ch. 4, p. 92; Gonda J. *Vedic Ritual*, p.213; Gonda J. 'Indian Mantra', *Selected Studies*, vol.4, p.248; Gardiner A. H., 'Magic' (Egyptian) *ERE*, vol. 8, p.265; Smith K. E., 'Magic', (Greek and Rome), *ERE*, vol. 8, p.284; Wünsch R., 'Charms and Amulets', (Roman) *ERE*, vol. 3, p.461.
2. *Magic a Sociological Study*, p.92.
3. Cf. Gonda J., *Vedic Ritual*, p.293-299; Bhattacharya B. N., 'Indian Hymns', *Prabuddha Bhārata*, Sept. 1949 (54), Pp.353-364; Stall F., *The Science of Ritual* p. 4-5; Dasgupta SB, 'The Role of Mantra in Indian Religion', *Bulletin of Ramkrishna Mission Inst.* 7(5), pp.49-57; Modak B. R., 'Employment of A Vedic Mantras' *J.K.U. (H)* 10, 1966, pp.11-19; Crooke W., 'Charms and Amulets' (Indian) *ERE*, vol. 3, p. 441; Keith A. B., *Religion and Philosophy of Veda and Upaniṣads*, vol. 2, p.393; Frazer J. G., *The Golden Bough* (abr. ed.) pp.52-53, Gonda J. *R̥gVidhāna* (tr.) Utrecht – 1951 (see Introduction) pp.3-4.
4. See Hillebrandt A. 'Brahman' *ERE*, vol. 2, p.497; Griswold H. D. *Brahman, A study in the History of Indian Philosophy*; Gonda J. *Notes on Brahman*, p.3; Bhattacharya L., 'On the significance of the name Brahman' *Vedic Ideas applied to A.V. Our Heritage* vol. 5, part – II,



July-Dec. 1957, Pp. 205-219; **Griffith**, *Hymns of the AV.*, vol. 1, Preface, p. 3-4.

5. Quated by **Gonda J.** in his *Notes on Brahman*, p.14, also he quates AV. 5.20.10. in the same page where the wardrum is sharpened.
6. Cf. *Brhaddevatā* 4.117-119; Griffith's note to his tr. to RV.3.53.21-24 and **Gonda J.** note to his tr. to *R̥gVidhāna* 2.3.5-2.4.4.
7. For more information about *kṛtyā* see AV.5.31 and KauS.39.
8. According to Sayana *apvā* is the presiding deity of sin or evil (*pāpābhīmāninī devatā*).
9. According to **Oldenberg** the *sauparna* hymn is not found in any Vedic *samhitās* or in *suparnādhyāya*, see his foot note to his tr. to AśvGS.3.12.13-14, *SBE*, vol. 29, p. 234; But according to Sayana's com. on AB.6.25 (29.9); this hymn is from RV.8.59 which is repeated in RVKhila.1.6 and begins with -'imāni vām bhāga dheyāni... etc.' containing seven verses or ṛks. or it can be from RVKhila.1.3 containing seven ṛks and begins with *pradhārā yantu ... etc.*
10. For this hymn pronounced by Indrāṇī see, *B. D.* 8.55-57 and *R.V.Sarvānukramaṇikā* 64.
11. This hymn comes in AV.3.18 with an interchange of the place for the stanzas 3 and 4.
12. *ĀpGS*.3.9.9 refers to *Āp.Mantrapāṭha*.1.16 which is identical with RV.10.159.
13. For the demons and evil spirits becoming agents of the sorcerers or evil practisers see **Griswold**, *The Religion of the RV.* p.94-95; **Saletore R. N.** *Indian Witchcraft*, p.151.
14. **Griswold**, *The Religion of the RV.* pp. 94-95.
15. **Macdonell** 'Magic' (Vedic) *ERE*, vol. 8, p. 311. For the magicoreligious use of YajurVedic formulas see **Thite G. U.**, 'Magicoreligious application of the White YV.' *CASS Studies*. No. 1, Pp. 65-81.
16. For the apotroptic power of Agni see **Macdonell**, 'Magic' (Vedic) *ERE* vol. 8, p.316; **King L. W.**, 'Magic' (Babylonian), p. 225; **Keith, R. and Ph. of V. and Up.** P.285; **Shende N. J.**, 'Agni in the *Brāhmaṇas* of RV.', *ABORI.*, vol. 46, pt. 1-4, pp. 20-24.
17. cf. also Sayana's commentary on it.
18. According to **Keith**, 'Araru', is the name of an evil spirit to whom both the heaven and earth are denied. See Keith's f.n. 2 to his tr. to TS. Pt. 1, p. 9; **Navathe P. D.**, has tried to give an identification of this 'araru' in his paper 'About Araru - Legend and Mythology', *CASS Studies*, No. 2, pp. 51-55. He gives



- various opinions about Araru, viz. – ‘a personified hostility’, ‘a foreigner or any enemy’, etc. Araru occurs in RV.1.129.3; 10.99.10 and AV.6.46.1. Sāyana while commenting the first text mentions it as a moving cloud but in other two texts mentions that Araru is the proper name of an Asura.
19. MS., KS. and VS. differ from TS. regarding the structure of the formula and ŚB, KŚS, MŚS etc. differ in the procedure of the rite.
  20. In MS. and ŚB. the formula slightly differs – ‘driven away is Śaṇḍa, driven away is Marka, together with that whom we hate.’
  21. KS. and KapS. do not mention the first part of the formula given in TS. and start with – ‘here I cut ...’.
  22. MS., KS. and KapS. do not mention the first part of the formula given in TS. and start with – ‘here do I cut ...’.
  23. It appears to be a case of contagious magic. For this cf. Frazer J. G. ‘The Golden Bough’ (abdg. ed.) p.11.
  24. See also Keith’s tr. to TS., part 1, f.n. 1, p. 4.
  25. The word ‘valaga’ is found to be plural in KS., KapS., MS. and makers of *valagas* are many according to those texts.
  26. Cf. Gonda J., *Vedic Ritual*, p.324; for the examples of similar practices with buried substances see Saligmann Kurt, ‘Magic’, ‘Supernaturalism and Religion’, p. 17.
  27. MS. and KS. slightly differ in formula and BhŚS. does not prescribe any rite for this formula.
  28. These *daśahotr*. formulas are found in MS.1.9.1; KS.9.8; TA.3.1. They start from – ‘Om cittiḥ sruk ... (upto) *sāmādhvaryuh*’.
  29. The *pañcalotr* formulas are found in MS.1.9.1 and KS.9.8. They start with – ‘Agnirhotā ... (upto) *Bṛhaspatirupavaktā*’.
  30. Cf. KŚS.1.3.1 – *ṛco yajurṣi sāmāni nigadā mantrāḥ*; see also Dictionary of Vedic Ritual, p.118.
  31. Cf. *SāmaVidhānaBrāhmaṇa*, 2.3.1; 2.6.11; 3.5.1; also see ‘Magical Kāmya Rites in *SāmaVidhānaBrāhmaṇa*’ by Bhattacharya V. C.; 1. H. Q. vol. 35, No. -4, p.317.
  32. The *sāmans* were believed to have many purposes, 1) fulfillment of any desire (*kāmasani*), 2) obtaining progeny (*prajanana*), 3) procuring cattle (*paśavya*), 4) obtaining food (*annada*), 5) attaining heaven (*svargya*), 6) killing one’s enemy (*bhrātṛvayāḥ*); cf. Iyer A. S., ‘The Sāmans’, J. U. B. vol. 31, part II, p.45.
  33. Thite G. U. *Dvisvabhāva Music*, (Publication of CASS. Univ. of Poona) 1973, p. 52; Iyer A. S., ‘The Sāmans’, p. 42.



34. **Gonda J.**, *Vedic Ritual*, p.472; **Burnell A. C.**, *Sāma Vidhāna Brāhmaṇa* (Introduction, section -2), for a detailed study of the magicoreligious significance of *sāmans* etc. see **Thite G. U.**, *Music, its magicoreligious significances in the Veda* (unpublished).
35. Cf. **Devasthali G. V.**, *Religion and Mythology of the Brāhmaṇas*, p.2; **Eggeling J.**, ŚB. Part II, SBE. vol. 26, Introduction, p. 24; **Sharma B. R.**, *ṢaḍVBr.* (Introduction), p.19.
36. For the story of *Dīrghajihvī* see AB.2.22.
37. Cf. **Gayatonde S. N.**, 'The *Sāmans* -II', JUB – vol. 32, part II, 1936, p. 124.
38. Cf. Caland's f.n. to his tr. to TMB.14.4.5, p.357.
39. The word sometimes is used in hostile sense, cf. Caland's f.n. to his tr. to TMB.14.4.4, p.357 and his tr. to ŚŚS.14.22.8, p.386.
40. **Sen C.**, *Dictionary of Vedic Ritual*, p. 121; **Bollee's** f.n. to his tr. to *ṢaḍVBr.* 3.3.1, p.72; **Caland's** introductory remarks to II and III chapters of *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* (= TMB), p. 18; the regular *stomas* are, *trivṛt*, *pañcadaśa*, *saptadaśa*, *ekaviṃśa*, *catuṣviṃśa*, *pañcaviṃśa*, *triṇava*, *trayastrimśa*, *catuṣcatvarimśa* and *aṣṭācatvārimśa*.
41. For details see Sāyaṇa's commentary on *ṢaḍVBr.* 4.4.4.
42. For the *trivṛt stoma* identified with thunderbolt see also *ṢaḍVBr.* 3.6.3, 3.7.2, 3.8.2.
43. For the *pañcadaśa stoma*, identified with thunderbolt, see *ṢaḍVBr.* 3.7.2.
44. Cf. TMB.6.1.8 and also Sāyaṇa's commentary to TMB.2.4.2.
45. For the *trivṛtstoma* identified with thunderbolt see *ṢaḍVBr.* 3.6.3; 3.7.2 and 3.8.2.
46. *Dictionary of Vedic Ritual*, p. 107, Caland's introductory remarks to the II and III chapters of *PañcVBr.*, p.19.
47. The *hum* or *him* sound is to be uttered at the beginning of each round of a *viṣṭuti* in all *stomas*.
48. Cf. **Sukla S. N.**, 'Concept of Mystic *Vyāhṛtis*', *Indian Philosophy and Culture*, 16(4), 1974, p.287.
49. Cf. **Gardiner A. H.**, 'Magic' (Egypt), *ERE.*, vol. 8, p. 265; **Gonda J.**, *Notes on names and Name of God in Ancient India*, pp. 21 and 63.



## 5

## POWER SUBSTANCES USED IN THE ABHICĀRA RITES

The performers of magical rites generally use some magical power substances in order to make their performances more effective. These substances are indeed numerous, such as animals or birds and some animal products, herbs and herb products etc. Even the qualifiers like numbers, colours etc. of these substances play important role from magical point of view. In this chapter some such power substances used in the Vedic magical rites are to be dealt with.

A magician priest claiming an extraordinary will power can use different animals and animal products in a magicoreligious way. In order to bring injury, death or any other harm to an enemy the performers of blackmagical rites make use of animals either dead or alive or some of their products like blood, skin, bone, urine, faeces, milk, hair, sweat etc. The personified blackmagic called *Kṛtyā* is metaphorically described to be an animal i.e. a living being. For example, the cow of a brahmin being stolen is said to become the incarnation of *kṛtyā* (*sākṣātkṛtyā*) (AV.12.5.12). The act of slaying this cow is identical with *kṛtyā* and that of cutting up with a weapon (*menih*). The content of her bowels are called the secret charm (*valaga*) (AV.12.5.39). Various types of animals or birds can be used in order to produce a *kṛtyā* (black magic personified). Thus onehoofed animals, the animals having both the upper and lower teeth, cattle, donkey (AV.5.31.3) cock, goat, ewe (AV.5.31.2), kine



and men (AV.4.18.5 and 10.1.4) etc. are said to be useful for this purpose. Among the products of the living beings, the human bone (AV.5.31.9) and raw flesh (AV.5.31.1 and 10.1.4) etc. are said to be useful for this purpose. Among the products of the living beings, the human bone (AV.5.31.9) and raw flesh (AV.5.31.1 and 4.17.4) can also be used for same purpose.

A black horse is made to stand near the altar while the *ṣoḍaśin* laud is being chanted on the fourth day of a twelve day sacrifice and it is said in TMB.12.13.26 that this horse being made to stand there blows away the dwelling place of the rival of the sacrificer. At the time of preparation of the ground for the Fire-altar in the fire building rite, the priest has to take a horse towards the eastern side of the fire and again to take it back towards the western side of the fire. This is done, according to MS.3.2.5, in order to enable the priest to kill the foe of the sacrificer who is either superior or inferior or equal to the sacrificer. In this connection TB.1.1.5.5 says that the priest, by doing this kills the foes of the sacrificer who are already born and who are yet to be born. The horse in the horse sacrifice is identified with thunderbolt while it is made to stand on the water during the bathing rite. A dog after it has been killed is thrown on the water surface and its corps floats below the belly of the horse and this is considered to be a symbolical rite of killing one's foe with the help of thunderbolt (horse) (TB.3.8.4.2; ŚB.13.1.2.9).

In the blackmagical rites of some other societies also dogs have a role to play.<sup>1</sup> In a rite to be performed in order to protect oneself from the curse of an enemy a dog is given to eat a white clay lump (*piṇḍam pāṇḍum*) (KauSū.48.23).

Animals are made to run towards the enemies after they are duely charmed with magical utterances.<sup>2</sup> For example, a bull is made to run towards the enemy (KauSū.49.1). Similarly, in a battle rite the magician priest of a king lets a white footed-she-goat run towards the rival



army in order to create disturbances or confusion among them (KauSū.14.12).

The Vedic people consider frog as useless creature, for, no one subsists on it and it can neither be grouped among the domestic animals nor among the wild beasts (TS.5.4.4.3). But it is useful in some Vedic rites some of which are of abhicāra type. Thus in a rite to be performed in order to kill one's enemy a green-striped-frog tied with a thread of red-blue colour is to be put into hot water and is not allowed to even when it tries to come out. Ultimately it dies in that hot water (KauSū.48.40). In another blackmagical rite a lizard with red head is prescribed to be killed and burnt in the fire (KauSū.47.39-40).

It is known from the AV.5.31.9 that human bones can be used in the rite for creating *krtyā*. Similarly, the raw flesh of a red goat and gravy of a red-brown-bull are to be given to *krtyā* as her food in a counter abhicāra rite (KauSū.39.14). After the offering of omentum in an animal sacrifice flesh taken from three limbs of the victim are offered in the fire to *Agni-sviṣṭakṛt*. These three limbs are (1) the shoulder, from the fore part of the body, (2) the intestines from the middle part and (3) the hip from the hind part of the victim. This flesh offering is said to be meant for overcoming the rival of the sacrificer (TS.6.3.10.6).

Use of blood in blackmagical practices is very common. In West Africa, if a drop of blood is fallen on ground one must carefully cover it up, rub or stamp it in to the soil, if it has fallen into the side of canoe or a tree, the place is cut out and the chip destroyed. The motive is to prevent the blood from falling into the hands of magicians who can make an evil use of it. Similar belief prevails in New Guinea also<sup>3</sup>. In the Vedic literature the blood of a sacrificial animal (victim) is said to be the share of Raksases (ŚB.3.8.2.14). During the Horse sacrifice the blood of the victim is offered to *Agni sviṣṭakṛt*, so that the sacrificer will overcome his rival (ŚB.13.3.4.2). After the *pravargya* ceremony is over, if



one wants to practise abhicāra against one's enemy one should bring the blood of one's enemy by any means and offer it with the formula mentioned in TA.4.37 (ĀpŚS.15.19.7; HŚS.24.7.27; BhŚS.11.20.3). During a *grhya* abhicāra rite, before a lizard with red head is burnt in fire, it is besmeared with blood (KauSū.47.10). In another abhicāra rite the performer strikes his foe with the help of a decayed bamboo stick besmeared with blood and poison (KauSū.47.24).<sup>4</sup>

Hides of some animals are considered to be magically effective. In soma-sacrifice of abhicāra type hide of a cow slaughtered in a funeral ceremony is to be used for the spreading at the time of pressing the somastalk (ŚŚS.14.22.17). In a blackmagical rite, in order to bring misfortune to a woman, the substances to be buried include a piece of hide of a cow died of fever or killed in a funeral ceremony (KauSū.36.15). The fore skin of the organ of a male-calf is prescribed to be used in another abhicāra rite according to KauSū.47.47-49.<sup>5</sup> During the performance of a counter action of *Kṛtyā* the performer has to make the *Kṛtyā* sleep on a skin fastened to some sticks (KauSū.39.15-17).

Hairs are considered to be an important medium of the contagious magic and are widely used in such rites by many people of the world.<sup>6</sup> Hairs of a woman are buried along with some other substances in a blackmagical rite against that woman (KauSū.36.15). Three curled hairs of another woman intertwined with a black thread are to be put under three stone one after another for the same purpose (KauSū.36.17).

Urine and faeces of certain animals are believed to be powerful from the blackmagical point of view. Urine and faeces of a male calf are to be buried along with some other substances in an abhicāra rite (KauSū.48.32). It is prescribed in KauSū.48.16 that for the practise of abhicāra the performer should take the dust from the foot print of a foe and scatter



them on the excrement of a cow. In another rite the performer has to conceal a stone inside the cowdung (KauSū.48.19-22). In order to make a particular woman sterile the performer brings the urine of a mule, also brings two rounded stones and rubs these stones putting the urine in between. There by some liquid is produced which the performer mixes with the food and ornament of the woman (KauSū.36.33).

Sweat is magically supposed to be representing heat, torture etc. It is believed that the use of sweat in blackmagical rites heats the enemy to the extreme point.<sup>7</sup> In some abhicāra rites the performer besmears some substances with sweat (of his own body) and offers them in the fire (KauSū.47.43-45).

Milk products are also used in some abhicāra rites. In ŚŚS.14.22.16 one finds a prescription that the sacrificial ghee for the abhicāra sacrifices is to be prepared out of the milk of a sick-cow. Curd prepared out of the milk of a red she-goat is mixed with the powder of *bāṇāparṇī*-leaves and the performer sprinkles this liquid on the bed of a lover and his beloved in order to create hatred between these two (KauSū.36.19; 38). One who wants to counter act *Kṛtyā* should bring some churned curd in which water has not been mixed and which is prepared out of the milk a cow that has a calf of her own colour. The performer has to sprinkle the curd around the ankles of *kṛtyā* (KauSū.39.13).

The world of plants is always believed to be sympathetic towards the human beings. It fulfils various desires of man from the time immemorial. It is believed that each and every plant or plant-product has some sort of medical as well as magical power. A magician uses this secret power of plants for both defensive and offensive purposes. Thus the wood of some trees, wooden articles made out of some particular trees, branches, leaves, fruits, firesticks, wooden chips, grasses, some objects made of a particular kind of grass, grains and grain-products,



oil, husks, flour etc. are used in blackmagical rites. In AV. it is said that *Kṛtyā* (the personified blackmagic) can be produced by means of a rootless plant (5.31.4), mixed grain (5.31.1) or *barhis* (10.1.18).

According to AV.3.6.6 the *Aśvattha* tree is superior to all trees in the forest and most important among all the trees. It is requested to over-power the enemies (AV.3.6.4) and to crush the yonder-man (the enemy) (AV.8.8.3). While fetching fire in the pan during the fire-building rite a fire-stick from the *Aśvattha* tree is to be put on the pan. In this context KS.19.10 mentions that this tree is the subduer of the rivals and by putting this stick on the pan the sacrificer is supposed to coverup the rival with the fire. According to KauSū.48.1, the fire sticks of this tree are included in the group called 'rival-annihilating' (*saptnakṣayaṇī*) and in an abhicāra rite they are to be offered in the fire kindled in the forest. With the help of an *Aśvattha* branch the performer of another abhicāra rite has to push away a boat containing nooses in the water (KauSū.48.5). During another abhicāra rite an offering of *iṅgida*-oil is prescribed to be made in the fire by means of a leaf of a red-*Aśvattha* tree (KauSū.48.31). An *Aśvattha* tree grown on a *Khadira* tree is addressed in AV.3.6 and according to KauSū.48.3, an amulet made of the wood of this tree is to be bound by a performer of an abhicāra rite. The parasitic trees or plants are believed to possess a strong magical power in themselves for which these are used in various magical rites.<sup>8</sup> In another abhicāra rite faggots of an *Aśvattha* tree which has been fallen down itself are put on the fire (KauSū.49.2).

The *bādhaka* tree is found to be prescribed more frequently in black magical rites than any other tree. The name itself indicates the act of oppressing or annulling<sup>9</sup>. The faggots of this tree are also included in the group called rival-annihilating (KauSū.16.14) and one should put its sticks on the fire in the forest during an abhicāra rite (KauSū.48.1).



This tree is requested in AV.8.8.3 to slay the enemies. The sacrificial post in the *Śyena* sacrifice is made out of *bādhaka* wood (or *tilaka* wood) (ṢaḍVBr.4.2.16). According to ŚŚS.14.22.14, in all the abhicāra sacrifices the faggots as well as the encircling sticks should be of *bādhaka* wood. A stick of this tree is buried along with some other substances in an abhicāra rite (KauSū.48.32). A staff made of *bādhaka* wood is used in another abhicāra rite prescribed in KauSū.47.46-53. In other two different abhicāra rites some fire sticks of this tree are put in the fire according to KauSū.47.13 and 48.26.<sup>10</sup> One should take some dust from the foot print of his foe by means of a *bādhaka* leaf and put the same in a frying pan for the sake of abhicāra (KauSū.47.28). A magician can make pegs of *bādhaka* wood, attach these with some nooses, make powder of these and put the powder in a frying pan in order to practise abhicāra (KauSū.49.20-21). A bow made of this wood has to be smashed on the foot print of an eunuch in a rite performed against the paramour of one's wife (KauSū.36.36).

In ŚB.13.8.1.6<sup>11</sup>, the *vibhītaka* tree is included in a group of trees which are believed to be pernicious. A sacrificer who has enemies should make his sacrificial post either of *vibhītaka* wood or of *rājavr̥kṣa* wood (ṢaḍVBr.5.4.3). But according to ŚŚS.14.22.15, the sacrificial post for all the abhicāra sacrifices should be made out of the *vibhītaka* wood. Similarly, the faggots in the *Śyena* sacrifice should be of *vibhītaka* wood (ṢaḍVBr.4.2.21 and ĀpŚS.22.4.21). According to ĀśvŚS.3.7.7-8 either *vibhītaka* or *bādhaka* wood can be used in preparing the faggots in the *śyena* sacrifice. During the performances of a special *iṣṭi* against enemies (in which cooked food of black rice is to be offered to Soma and Rudra) the faggots should be of *vibhītaka* wood (MS.2.1.6; KS.11.5). In a special animal sacrifice meant for abhicāra, some fire sticks of this wood should be used (TS.2.1.5.7).

The *vikāṅkata* wood, in ŚB.5.2.4.18, is described to be identical with the thunderbolt. In AV.5.8.1 it is indicated that



a person offers oblation in the fire kindled by the faggots of *vikāṅkata* and requests Agni to carry his oblation to the other deities in the rite against enemies. An abhicāra rite is prescribed in KauSū.48.8 in which the performer offers libations with the help of a ladle made of *vikāṅkata* wood in the fire enkindled with the faggots of the same wood.<sup>12</sup>

The *tilaka* wood is included in the group of trees called ill-named (*pāpanāmānaḥ*) (ŚB.13.8.1.16). An amulet made of this wood is considered to be protective and apotropaic by nature. In a counter abhicāra rite this amulet is to be bound by the performer for the sake of protection as well as reentrant (*pratisara*), counter conjuring (*pratyabhicāraṇa*) (AV.2.11.2), body protecting (*tanūpāna*) (AV.2.11.4) and spoiler's spoiler, weapon's weapon, missile's missile (AV.2.11.1; see also AV.8.5). This tree is optionally prescribed (the other option is *bādhaka*) for the sacrificial post in the *Śyena* sacrifice (ŚaḍVBr.4.2.16). In the fire building rite when fire is created in a pan some fire sticks are to be put on the pan in order to enkindle the fire. For the sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra the priest should put the fire sticks of *tilaka* wood on the pan (MS.3.1.9; ĀpŚS.16.10.2; HŚS.11.3.19). This wood is said to be identical with thunderbolt (MS.3.1.9).

The *khadira* tree is requested to devour the enemies in AV.8.8.3. Its name derives from the root *khād* (to devour). According to KauSū.47.51 a ladle made of the *khadira* wood is to be used in digging a hole for burying some magical substances in an abhicāra rite. This tree is included in the group of trees called 'rival-annihilating' (KauSū.16.14).

*Variśa* or bamboo is included in the list of trees which are considered to be capable of causing any person to quit his occupation (*uccāṭana*) (AV.Pariśiṣṭa.26.5.3). Thus it is indicated that bamboo is connected with blackamgical power. A performer of abhicāra rites while undergoes the consecration ceremony takes a bamboo staff which is called *āṅgīrasa daṇḍa* (KauSū.47.12). It is prescribed in another



abhicāra rite that the performer should strike his foe with a decayed bamboo stick (KauSū.47.24).

The group of rival-annihilating trees includes another tree viz. *palāsa* (KauSū.16.14).<sup>13</sup> It has apotroptic power. An offering spoon of this wood is prescribed to be used in order to eradicate Rakṣases and evil spirits (ŚB.5.2.4.18). For the sake of self protection one has to bind an amulet of this wood in an abhicāra rite<sup>14</sup> (KauSū.48.24). In another abhicāra rite which aims at nullifying the sacrifice of an enemy the performer offers some husks of grains in the fire with the help of a middle *palāsa* leaf, i.e. using the leaf as a ladle (KauSū.48.28).

Wood and branches of some other trees are also used for blackmagical purposes. The trees which have some disqualifications are considered to be inauspicious and harmful. Therefore, these are used in order to destroy him whom one hates. Thus the priest who wants to make a sacrificer devoid of cattle should make the sacrificial post out of a tree the top part of which is dried and which is without leaves (TS.6.3.3.4; KS.26.3; KapS.41.1; BhŚS.7.1.9). Similarly in an animal sacrifice a branch having no side branches or leaves is prescribed to be used by the priest for leading the animal (victim) forward in case he hates the sacrificer and wants to deprive him of cattle (KS.26.7; KapS.41.5; ĀpŚS.7.12.6). Faggots prepared from a tree which is dried at the top are to be offered in the fire during an abhicāra rite (KauSū.48.38). In another abhicāra rite the faggots of a tree struck by thunderbolt are put in the fire (KauSū.48.37). The trees which are dried at their tops and do not have leaves or branches are considered to be harmful. The thunder-struck trees are thought to be inauspicious and generally avoided in auspicious rites.<sup>15</sup>

One of the plants called *pāṭhā* is used in a rite to create hatred between a lover and his beloved. The plant is also known as *bāṇāparṇī*.<sup>16</sup> Its leaves are crushed to powder and mixed with a magical liquid which the performer sprinkles



on the bed of a lover and his beloved (KauSū.36.38). A wife can make use of this plant in the same way against her cowives (KauSū.36.19). This plant is described as rough (*trṣṭik*.) and as poisonous (*viṣā*) (AV.7.113.1-2).

The *apāmārga* plant is well known for its apotroptic nature. As its name suggests it stands for wiping away (*apamrj*). Thus the term '*apāmārga*' means offwiper. It has been originated from the place where the gods wiped off the Asuras (AV.4.19.4). It is called '*praticīnaphala*' or having reverted fruit because according to AV.4.19.7 it has come into being reverted. In the course of the *Rājasūya* sacrifice a counter blackmagical rite is performed (*pratyabhicāra*) with this *apāmārgas* made into groats (ŚB.5.2.4.20).

The performer of an abhicāra rite should bury a plant called *simijāvarī* in the cow-pen of his foe with the formulas given in TĀ.4.39 (ĀpŚS.15.19.9-10; BhŚS.11.20.5). This plant is called self-born (*svajā*) (BhŚS.11.20.5) and bed-born (*talpajā*) (TA.4.39). It comes out of the earth without cultivation.<sup>17</sup>

*Pramanda*, a fragrant plant is to be used in a rite against a woman in order to bring illluck to her. The performer buries this plant with some other substances in the ground (KauSū.36.15).

In KauSū.16.14 the *sara* grass (reed) is listed in the group designated as rival-annihilating. It is found to be used very often in the blackmagical rites.<sup>18</sup> This is used as sacrificial grass in the *Śyena* sacrifice and said to be meant for hurting the rivals (*śīrtiyai*) (ṢaḍVBr.4.2.20). In ŚŚS.14.22.13 and ĀśvŚS.3.7.5 this is prescribed to be used as sacrificial grass in all the abhicāra sacrifices. It is found to serve the same purpose in a special animal sacrifice meant for abhicāra (TS.2.1.5.7) and in a special *iṣṭi* meant for the same (MS.2.1.6; KS.11.5). According to KauSū.47.1 the reeds are to be cut in both sides and are strewn on the altar for any domestic



abhicāra rite. The *sadas*-shed of all the soma-sacrifices meant for abhicāra is to be covered with sharp-pointed reeds (ŚSS.14.22.9). In a special abhicāra rite called *āsurīgavya* the performer has to strew reeds all around the cooked rice before the rice is offered in the fire (MŚS.4.6.1.3). According to KS.23.4 the girdle of a consecrated soma-sacrificer should be made out of *śara* grass because it is identical with thunderbolt which the sacrificer is supposed to hurl at his foe. Again the consecrated sacrificer is advised to anoint his eyes by means of a reed stalk which enables him to chase away the evil spirits with the help of the reed mystically identical with the thunderbolt (ŚB.3.1.3.13). The performer of a *grhya* abhicāra rite has to offer some reeds in the fire after smearing them with his sweat (KauSū.47.43-44).

An amulet of *darbha* is prayed in AV.19.28 and 29 to be harmful to the enemy. It is said to be the damager of rivals and the burner of the heart of the hater (AV.19.28.1). One also finds a rope made of *darbha* grass being used in the rite of counter action of *kṛtyā* in which the performer has to bind the *kṛtyā* (blackmagic sent by the enemy) by means of that rope (KauSū.39.19).

One notices the frequent use of barley grains (*yava*) in the harmful rituals. The word '*yava*' is derived from the root '*yu*' (to separate). According to ŚB.3.6.1.11, after digging the sounding holes (*uparavas*) in a soma sacrifice, the priest while sprinkles water on the holes should mix some barley grains in the sprinkling water in order to remove the enemies and evil spirits. Before performing a *grhya* abhicāra rite the performer has to drink a liquid for twelve days. The liquid is to be prepared out of hot water mixed with the powder of unhusked barley grains (KauSū.47.33-36). The performer of another abhicāra rite has to offer barley grains and sesame grains in the fire (KauSū.48.2).

Husks are the unwanted or rejected part of the grains.



These are always considered to be harmful substances with the help of which blackmagic can be performed. The husks or skin of some other grains or fruits are also believed to be magically powerful and used in magical practices by many people. For example, in New Guinea, the natives take utmost care to conceal the husks and the remains of food lest these should be found by their enemies who may use these for causing injury and destruction of the eater of food prepared out of the same grains. Similarly in Tana, one of the New Hebrides, the skin of banana is used by disease makers who burn the skin in order to make banana-eater to fall sick.<sup>19</sup> In the Vedic texts the husks of grains are said to be the share for Raksases (TS.1.1.5.2). A rite is prescribed in KauSū.14.18-19 to be performed against the rival army in the battle field in which the magician priest has to offer the husks of grains and small grain-particles on the fire so that the rival army will be confused. In order to nullify a foe's sacrifice some husks of grains are to be offered in the fire according to KauSū.48.28.

In abhicāra rites the *ingīḍa* oil is the substitute of the most common offering material, i.e. sacrificial *ghee* (*ājya*) according to KauSū.47. Whenever a prescription is made for offering in any *gr̥hya* abhicāra rite the oblation material should be supposed to be the *ingīḍa* oil. Sometimes the oil is used for besmearing the offering materials in such blackmagical rites (KauSū.48.4).

There are some other power substances used in the blackmagical rites and believed to possess some harmful power in themselves. For example, Agni, the fire is supposed to be a great magical power substance in general and many Vedic-blackmagical rites are performed in the presence of fire. Agni as the deified fire is supposed to be a remover of evil beings (unseen blackmagicians). The *Gārhapatya* fire is mentioned as a means of producing *kr̥tyā*, i.e. personified blackmagic (AV.5.31.5 and 10.1.8). The *āhavanīya* fire (or *pūrvāgni*) can also be used for the same purpose AV.5.31.5.



Agni is addressed as *rakṣāoh.* or the killer of demons (RV.10.162.1; ŚB.2.2.4.16; 4.4.5.7; 14.3.1.11).

The remnants of offering materials are believed to be magically potent.<sup>20</sup> The ghee which remains in the *juhū* and *upabhr̥t* after the offering of *anuyājas* in the N. and FM. sacrifices are prescribed to be offered again in the fire with the belief that the same would make the enemy of the sacrificer to pay tribute to the sacrificer (ŚB.1.8.2.17). While pressing the soma-plants in a soma-sacrifice the drops of soma-juice which adhere to the limbs or garments of the priest who presses the stalks are to be offered in the fire in order to perform blackmagic (ŚB.4.1.1.26; KŚS.9.4.39; ĀpŚS.12.11.10). In TS.1.6.2.1-2 it is said that the sacrificial ghee or any other material spoiled or rejected in the course of the sacrificial performances can be used for bringing harm to the enemies of the sacrificer. According to ŚB.6.5.2.22, if there is anything redundant in the sacrifice it is to be understood as something left over for the enemy of the sacrificer. This understanding has two fold significance. Thus the thing which remains can be useful to the enemy of the performer if he does not take note of it and it can be harmful to the enemy if a correct blackmagical use is made with the same. In the N. and FM. sacrifices, the priest, after husking the grains winnows away the husks from the grains uttering the formula mentioned in TS.1.1.5.2. Through this formula he declares that the husks are the share of Raksases and by winnowing the husks he is supposed to clear away the Raksases and evil spirits from the grains.

At the time of building the fire altar the priests have to put several kinds of bricks in various layers of the altar. Some of these bricks when put in their respective places are said to create blackmagical effects. A brick namely *aṣāḍhā* or *tryālikhitā* is to be put in the first layer which is said to exclude the foe from these worlds (TS.5.2.8.4; MS.3.2.7; ŚB.7.4.2.33-34). There are 28 bricks called *akṣṇāstomīyā* to be put in the fourth layer. These bricks are also said to serve for



overcoming the foes (TS.5.3.3.1; KS.20.13; KapS.31.14). The *asapatnā* bricks are five in number and these are to be put in the fifth layer. The third and fourth *asapatnā* bricks are described to be identical with thunderbolt and by putting these two bricks the priest hurls thunderbolt as it were, at the foes who are already born and who are yet to be born (TS.5.3.5.2).

In the Vedic texts the *sphya* or the wooden sword is frequently said to be thunderbolt (cf. KS.31.8; TB.3.2.9.10 etc.). According to KS.25.4, Indra hurled his thunderbolt at Vṛtra. It was divided into three, one third of it became the wooden sword, another one third became the sacrificial post and last one became the chariot. The priest draws a line around the altar of the N. and FM. sacrifices by means of the wooden sword and thereby he is said to drive away the rival of the sacrificer from the earth by means of the thunderbolt (KS.25.5). He cuts the root of some grasses from the place of the altar by means of the wooden sword. The sword being thunderbolt enables the priest to destroy the Raksases by means of this (KS.31.8; TB.3.2.9.10). The sacrificial posts have also a blackmagical significance. Thus in a special animal sacrifice meant for the practise of abhicāra the sacrificial post is said to be made in the shape of the wooden sword. As the wooden sword is said to be thunderbolt, by this the sacrificer hurls it as it were at the foe (TS.2.1.5.7). The top of the sacrificial post in the *Śyena* sacrifice should be like a wooden sword according to ṢaḍVBr.4.2.16.

Two ladles called *juhū* and *upabhṛt* are also found to be connected with blackmagic. In the N. and FM. sacrifices the priest has to push away the *juhū* and *upabhṛt* towards east and west respectively. It is said in TB.3.3.9.1 that by pushing the *juhū* the priest kills the enemies of the sacrificer who are already born and by pushing the *upabhṛt* he kills his enemies who are yet to be born. At this time the sacrificer has to utter an after formula (*anumantraṇa*) in which he declares that he



is killing all his enemies who are born or yet to be born by means of the *upabhṛt* (TB.3.7.6.9). According to MS.4.1.12 the *upabhṛt* is connected with the enemy of the sacrificer and the *juhū* is connected with the sacrificer himself. More ghee is to be filled in the *juhū* ladle than in the *upabhṛt*. By this symbolical act it is hoped that the enemy will be poor and the sacrificer rich.

Some other sacrificial materials are identified with thunderbolt in the Vedic texts and are described as harmful to the enemies. Thus a cup of soma-juice meant for offering to Indra with Maruts (*marutvaīyagraha*) is said to be thunderbolt and the drawing of soma juice in this cup is said to lead the sacrificer to hurl the thunderbolt at his enemy (TS.6.5.5.1). The staff of a consecrated sacrificer is also described to be thunderbolt with which the sacrificer chases away the evil spirits (ŚB.3.2.1.32). Very often the sacrificial ghee is also said to be the thunderbolt (cf. ŚB.3.5.3.15; 3.6.4.15; 3.7.1.10; 7.4.1.37).

At times the sacrificial gifts (*dakṣiṇā*) are found to have some blackmagical significance. Some discussions about *dakṣiṇā* in ŚB.13.1.5.6 and 13.4.2.7 imply that the *dakṣiṇā* should be agreeing with the purpose of the sacrifice. Sometimes the *dakṣiṇā* is given with evil intention. Thus at the time of the purificatory bath (*avabhṛtha*) at the end of *Gavāmayana* rite the sacrificer gives his black antelope skin to his foe (JB.2.67). It is indicated that by giving such a gift the sin of the sacrificer will be transferred to the foe because the rite of *avabhṛtha* is meant for removing sin from the sacrificer and other participants. While preparing the cakes for offerings if the cakes get burnt then it is thought that the sacrifice has been taken into the possession by Nirṛti (the goddess of destruction). Therefore, as an expiatory rite, the burnt cake and the gift of the particular offering rite are to be given to a hated person. By this the hated person is thought to be brought into the possession of Nirṛti (ĀpŚS.9.15.7; HŚS.15.4.26-27). Some other gifts are also said to be



dangerous by their nature and they are prescribed to be given to the enemies. In the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice at the time of giving gifts the sacrificer is instructed to give the gift which is refused by others to a person whom he hates in an addition to some other gifts (ĀpŚS.13.7.11-12; BhŚS.14.6.1; HŚS.10.4.15). The refused gift is considered as a female tiger (*vyāghrī*) as it were. It becomes dangerous to one who accepts the same (MS.4.8.3; KS.28.4). In the *Agnihotra* rite some materials (*sambhāras*) are to be collected in the *āhavanīya* fire place. At that time a piece of gold is to be thrown on these materials. Then the sacrificer has to give a piece of silver to his enemy as a gift (TB.1.1.3.4; ĀpŚS.5.10.4; HŚS.3.3.6). A piece of silver is considered as sorrow (*ārtī*) and by giving it to the hated person the performer is supposed to bestow all his sorrows on his enemy (TB.1.1.3.9). In a *sādyaskra* sacrifice meant for abhicāra a white horse is prescribed to be given to an *āṅgīrasa*-brahmin or to a hated person or to a hated brahmin after having invited him (to the sacrifice) (ĀpŚS.22.3.13-14; HŚS.17.1.50-52). Most possibly this gift is given to these persons with an intention to bring harm to them.<sup>21</sup> In the *Śyena* sacrifice blackmagically significant gifts (*dakṣiṇā*) are prescribed to be given. According to ŚaḍVBr.4.2.23, one should give three groups of nine cows. Elsewhere, more details of these cows are mentioned. Thus the cows should be quint-eyed or one-eyed, limping or hunch-backed, having their horns broken or cut-tailed etc. (ĀpŚS.22.4.24; HŚS.17.2.28; KŚS.22.3.19; LŚS.8.5.16). At the time of giving the cows they are to be pricked with thorns until blood comes out of their body. (KŚS.22.3.22; ĀpŚS.22.4.25; HŚS.17.2.29; LŚS.8.5.29). The purpose behind this is to magically pierce the enemy. In ŚaḍVBr.4.2.24 it is mentioned that by giving such gifts the performers make the enemy new (*nāvayanti*). This means that they cause the enemy to born again with a new body which presupposes his death.<sup>22</sup>

There are many other miscellaneous power substances used in the Vedic blackmagical rituals.



Water is well known for its apotropaic power.<sup>23</sup> It is identified with the thunderbolt (ŚB.12.9.2.6). It is considered to be the killer of Raksases (*āpo vai rakṣoghñīḥ*). It is mentioned in MS.4.5.1 and 4.8.5 that the Raksases do not cross water. Water is used in the blackmagical rites of Śrauta as well as grhya type. In some rites the performer throws handful of water towards his enemy. This throwing is known as hurling of water thunderbolt (*udavajra praharaṇa*) (KauSū.39.3.13; ĀpŚS.13.21.1; BŚS.20.19 etc.).

The practise of blackmagic through food is very common. Among the Chinese people the members of a family in the district of 'yen' manufactured 'ku' (blackmagic). Those who ate their food died of hemorrhage. A monk called TanYu once visited this family and the host prepared food for him. TanYu recited an incantation and saw a pair of centipedes, a foot-long, suddenly crawl away from the dish. He then ate the food and returned from there without being harmed.<sup>24</sup> In some grhya abhicāra-rites of the Vedic ritual the performer gives charmed food to the enemy (KauSū.47.37 and 48.42). Sometimes the food remains of the enemy after he finishes eating are used by the performer in the abhicāra rites against the enemy (cf. KauSū.47.37). In some cases the performer himself eats or drinks some food or liquid before practising an abhicāra rite (KauSū.47.33-36). Thus food or drink is considered to be magically powerful. According to AV.6.135.2 while a person (a performer of abhicāra rite) drinks something he drinks the breath of his enemy. One also finds that in some cases certain other magical substances are to be mixed with food and that food is given to the foe for eating (cf. KauSū.36.33; 47.23). Mixing some magical substances in the food might be a process of making the food magically poisonous. Poisoning and blackmagic are found together in many countries.<sup>25</sup>

One gets some information about the use of various metals or instruments made of metals in blackmagical



practices. The lead is said to be a dispeller of demons (*yātucātanam*) (AV.1.16.2). The performer of a rite against misfortune declares that he is going to attach the misfortune (*pāpīlakṣmī*) to a person whom he hates by means of a hook of metal (*ayasmayenārīkena*) (AV.7.115.1). Another person uses the spears of iron (*ayasmayīḥ*) and gold (*hiranyayīḥ*) against the wicked Gandharvas (AV.4.37.8-9). By means of the knives of good metal (*svāyasā asayaḥ*) a counter practiser of *kṛtyā* threatens *kṛtyā* (personified blackmagic) to cut her joints if she does not obey him (AV.10.1.20). In the N. and FM. sacrifices if the priest desires to perform abhicāra then he should put the *praṇītā* water in a plate made of bell (*kāṁsya*) or white copper (KŚS.2.3.5). Powders of lead and iron along with some other substances are prescribed to be mixed with the food which is to be given to a foe in an abhicāra rite (KauSū.47.23). In the *Agnihotra* rite a piece of silver is to be given to a hated person as a gift by means of which the sacrificer is supposed to put all his sorrows on him and in this context this piece of silver is considered to be sorrow (*ārti*) (TB.1.1.3.9).

The gravels are mystically connected with thunderbolt. Regarding their origin it is mentioned in MS.1.6.5 that Indra threw his thunderbolt at Vṛtra. The sparklings of the thunderbolt became gravels. Some abhicāra rites are performed by means of gravels or stones.<sup>26</sup>

For instance, in a soma sacrifice the priests need five pressing stones to press soma-stalks. With the help of these stones the priest can practise blackmagic by placing them in different manners and shoving the *dronakalasa* (wooden tub) over these stones (cf. TMB.6.6.2,5). A stone taken from a river that has no specific name is to be thrown towards south during a *grhya* abhicāra rite (KauSū.47.32). During another abhicāra rite a stone is to be concealed inside cowdung (KauSū.48.19). These stones and some other substances are prescribed to be buried in the course of the performance of a blackmagical rite against a woman (KauSū.36.15). The



performer of a blackmagical rite against the paramour of one's wife has to strike a stone at the place of copulation of the wife and the paramour (KauSū.36.37). The performer of a battle rite should winnow away twenty-one gravles in order to create confusion in the rival army (KauSū.14.20).

Generally, an unbaked or half baked vessel is considered to be inauspicious and harmful. *Kṛtyā* can be produced by means of a half baked vessel (AV.4.17.4 and 5.31.1). According to KauSū.48.43 the performer, after giving the foe to eat some charmed food makes him wash his hands in a raw vessel.

In some abhicāra rites one finds the use of nooses (*pāśas*) (cf. KauSū.48.4; 5-6; 49.20-21). The performers while using them consider as if they were the representatives of the enemies. Therefore the harmful actions done on the nooses are thought to affect the enemies in the same harmful manner. Moreover, the performers are instructed to prepare the nooses equal to the number of the enemies (cf. KauSū.48.4).

Dust from the foot print of enemy is another power substance which become a means for blackmagical practices. In Nigeria, a lorry driver quarreled with a man who later on collected some sands and earth marked by the tyre treads of that lorry. Out of those sands a magical medicine was prepared and shortly afterwards the driver was killed in an accident.<sup>27</sup> One also finds in the Vedic abhicāra rites the use of dust of this type by the performers (cf. KauSū.47.28; 45; 48.16-17). The magical power of poison is also expected to work against the enemy in some abhicāra rites. Poison is mixed with some other substances which are to be buried (KauSū.47.47) or put in the fire (cf. KauSū.48.31). In another rite a decayed bamboo-stick is to be smeared with poison by means of which the performer has to beat his foe (cf. Keśava's Paddhati to KauSū.47.24).

One can produce *kṛtyā* by means of arrows according



to AV.5.31.7. Arrows are requested to pierce a liar (*vācāstena*) in his vitals (RV.10.85.15). In all the soma sacrifices of abhicāra type the *āgnīdhra*-shed is covered with arrows according to ŚSS.14.22.11. A counter practiser of *krtyā* should shoot an arrow at the *krtyā* produced by his enemy (KauSū.39.11-12).

Wardrum is used in a battle rite prescribed in KauSū.16.1 where the drum (along with some other percussion instruments) is to be duely charmed and then beaten thrice by the performer. Afterwards it is handed over to the drummers. The wardrum is praised highly and requested to do many harms to the enemies in the battle field (AV.5.20 and 21). It is described as a lion (AV.5.20.3) and a bull (AV.5.20.3). It is requested to roar loudly like a lion against the rival army (AV.5.20.1) and to infuse fear, confusion, mutual hatred, division of mind and heart etc. into the minds of the rival fighters (AV.5.21.1).

Salt is also found to be used in abhicāra rites.<sup>28</sup> The performer has to put a little salt along with some other substances which he has to bury in a hole in an abhicāra rite (KauSū.47.46). In another abhicāra rite mentioned in AV. Pāriśiṣṭa.16.10.2 the performer has to offer salt in fire for 108 times uttering the name of the foe.

While prescribing various details of blackmagical rites the Vedic texts mention some qualifications of some power substances like number and colour etc. These qualifications also have blackmagical significance.

Many materials are prescribed to be three in number. Thus in KauSū.36.17, the performer of a rite against a woman has to bring three curled hairs of that woman, intertwine them by means of a black thread and put them under three stones. In another abhicāra rite a liquid substance is to be prepared with three handfuls of unhusked barley grains and hot water (KauSū.47.34). The staff of the performer of the *grhya* abhicāra rites should have three *hast* length (one



*nimuṣṭi* is slightly less than the length of a closed hand) (KauSū.47.14). The girdle of a consecrated sacrificer (*mekhal.*) should be of three folds so that it is identified with thunderbolt which the sacrificer hurls at his foe by using the same (KS.23.4; MS.3.6.7).

Similarly, some ritual activities are prescribed to be carried out for three times for the sake of practicing blackmagic. The consecrated sacrificer of the *grhya* abhicāra rites should strike his staff three times daily with its point downward (KauSū.47.18). While hurling the water thunderbolt (*udavajra-praharaṇa*) the performer should throw handfuls of water thrice daily (KauSū.47.31). In another rite the performer should cut the foot print of his foe thrice horizontally and thrice vertically (KauSū.47.26). In KauSū.47.32 it is said that the performer should throw a stone having taken it from an unknown river (of which the name is not known) towards the southern direction for three times. According to KauSū.48.29 a performer has to spread the reeds on the altar of an abhicāra rite for three times. In KauSū.48.18 another performer is instructed to utter 'kill N. N.' for three times. The magician priest in a battle rite makes the wardrums charmed with some substances and before handing these over to the drummers he has to beat each of the drums for three times (KauSū.16.1).

The number fifteen has a connection with thunderbolt. For a soma-sacrificer who has foes the priest has to make the roof of the *sadas* shed with fifteen coverings (*pañcadaśa chadiḥ*). Being considered to be equal with the fifteenfold thunderbolt these coverings are said to serve for overcoming the foes of the sacrificer (TS.6.2.10.6). For the sacrificer who has foes the priest should make the sacrificial post of the length of fifteen *aratnis* (one *aratni* is equal with one fifth height of a man). So that the post becomes identical with fifteenfold thunderbolt. This post is supposed to serve for overcoming the foes of the sacrificer (TS.6.3.306).



In some blackmagical rites the number twentyone is also important. In the fire building rite when the fire is being produced in the pan, a gold plate (*rukma*) is to be put down. It should have twentyone projections (*nirbādhas*). With these twentyone *nirbādhas* the priest severs the foe from twentyone worlds of the gods (TS.5.1.10.3-4; KS.19.11). In order to create confusion in the rival army the performer of a battle rite is instructed to winnow away twenty-one gravels facing towards the rival army (KauSū.14.20).

Since the number nine is three times three, some material objects having this number are supposed to be identical with the threefold thunderbolt. Thus the fire-pan in the fire building rite is to be made with nine corners in case the sacrificer wants to practise abhicāra. Thereby the sacrificer hurls the thunderbolt at his foe (KS.19.6). While spreading gravels on the ground prepared for the fire altar in the fire building rite the priest should spread the gravels taking them nine by nine if he wants to practise abhicāra. These groups of nine gravels are also considered to be threefold thunderbolt which the priest hurls at the enemy of the sacrificer (KauSū.20.4). The sacrificial gift in the *Śyena* sacrifice consists of group of nine cows. By making this gift one desires to kill the enemy (see ṢaḍVBr.4.2.23-24).

Among other numbers eight and twentyseven are said to be somehow connected with the thunderbolt. The sacrificial post in an animal sacrifice is to be made with eight corners. The thunderbolt is also said to have eight corners. Thus the post being identical with the thunderbolt enables the sacrificer to hurl the same at his foe (AB.2.1; KB.10.1). In the fire building rite when the ground for the altar is being prepared the priest has to spread sands on the place and before that he has to spread some gravels on the ground. If the sacrificer has foes then the priest should spread twenty seven gravels which are identical with the three-fold thunderbolt and the sacrificer hurls the same at his foes (TS.5.2.6.3). Thus it may be remarked that the number of



things used in blackmagical rituals has some blackmagical importance.

In such rituals some colours also play an important role. According to primitive people the colours bear some magical power using which the desired results can be produced by magicians. In the words of *Gonda* 'for the ancient people a form could produce a similar form, colour could act on colour'.<sup>29</sup> This is true in the case of some Vedic rituals also. Some colours are believed to create harm to the enemy.

In MS.2.5.6 the black colour is said to be the form of evil. This is identified with darkness and darkness is said to be death (MS.2.1.6; 2.5.6; KS.11.5). According to TS.6.1.6.7 the black cow is dangerous. If one purchases soma-plant by giving a black cow to the soma-seller during a soma-sacrifice it will lead the sacrificer to death. This colour plays an important role in some blackmagical rites.<sup>30</sup> Thus for example, in order to practise abhicāra a special animal sacrifice is to be performed in which a black ram is offered to Varuṇa (MS.2.5.6). In a special *iṣṭi* sacrifice meant for the same purpose one should offer cooked food of black rice to Soma and Rudra (MS.2.1.6; KS.11.6). A black horse is made to stand near the altar at the time of the chanting of the *ṣoḍaśi*-laud in the performance of the fourth day of a twelve day soma-sacrifice, so that it will blow away the dwelling place of the rival of the sacrificer (TMB.12.13.26). During the performance of an abhicāra rite called *āsuriḡavya* the performer has to prepare some cooked food out of black rice grains and the milk of a black cow (MS.4.6.3). In a *gr̥hya* abhicāra rite, a lizard, after being killed is covered by means of a black cloth (KauSū.47.10). One black thread is to be intertwined with three hairs of a woman during a rite performed against that woman in order to bring misfortune on her (KauSū.36.17).

The colour red is associated with fertility, reproduction and sexual love and at times considered dangerous for



which the same is worthy to be used in blackmagical rites.<sup>31</sup> In all the abhicāra sacrifices the priests and sacrificers have to be dressed with red garments and red turbans (ŚaḍVBr.4.2.22; ŚŚS.14.22.20; ĀśvŚS.3.7.4; ĀpŚS.22.4.23; KŚS.22.3.15; LŚS.8.5.8). Similarly in a special animal sacrifice meant for abhicāra, the priests have to wear red garments and red turbans (ĀpŚS.19.16.6; HŚS.22.1.2). In another special animal sacrifice meant for the same purpose a red barren cow is to be offered to Rudra (TS.2.1.7.7). According to ŚaḍVBr.4.2.18 the sacrificial animal dedicated to Agni Rudravat should also be a red-one in the *Śyena* sacrifice. If the priest of a soma-sacrifice hates the sacrificer then at the time of making the strainers (*pavitra*) to be used for purifying soma-juice he should use the wool of red and black colours (ĀpŚS.10.26.18). A red goat is to be slaughtered during the preparatory rite for the counter action of *krtyā* in order to provide flesh to be used during the proper rite (KauSū.39.3). A red headed lizard is to be burnt during an abhicāra rite according to KauSū.47.39. For the purpose of creating hatred between a lover and his beloved, curd made out of the milk of a red she-goat is used in order to prepare a charmed liquid (KauSū.36.38).

Some objects of white colour are also used in blackmagical rites. If a priest in a soma sacrifice, purchases soma plants by giving a white cow to the soma-seller then the sacrificer is said to become a leprous (*duścarmā*) (TS.6.1.6.7). Thus it is indicated that if the priest hates the sacrificer he can use such a cow at his sacrifice. A white horse is to be given as the sacrificial gift to an *āṅgīrasa* brahmin or to a hated person in a *sādyaskra* soma-sacrifice meant for the purpose of abhicāra (ĀpŚS.22.3.13-14; HŚS.17.1.50-52). In order to create agitation among the rival army the magician priest of a king is instructed to make a white-footed-she-goat run towards the rival army during a battle-rite (KauSū.14.22).

Combination of colours like that of red and blue (*nīla-*



*lohita*) is considered to be useful in such harmful rituals. The personified blackmagic called *kṛtyā* is said to be red and blue in colour (RV.10.85.28). In AV.4.17.4 one finds that the *kṛtyā* can be made by means of the blue-red one.<sup>32</sup> During an abhicāra rite a frog is tied by means of two blue-red threads and put in the hot water according to KauSū.48.10.

## Conclusion

On the basis of the details given above it can be concluded that various power substances play important role in the abhicāra rites. These are described to be magically or rather blackmagically potent and therefore prescribed for the purpose or the argument can be vice-versa. However, the power substances are of various types like animals and animal products, trees and tree-products different sacrificial materials and instruments, some miscellaneous objects like food and drink, metals, stones, salt, arrows, wardrums etc. Some colours and numbers of such power substances are also said to bear significance in this regard. One also notices some peculiar objects capable of bringing dangerous effects on the enemies or the rivals of the performers such as *dakṣiṇās* or some sacrificial fees causing harm to the recipients magically, dusts from the foot prints of some one used to bring evil on the same individual, nooses used to represent the enemy so that harms done on these can also sympathetically affect the represented ones. It is needless to point out that these power substances require proper rituals accompanying them and at times these rituals are performed with magically potent formulas as well as prayers to the gods. All of these are believed to increase the effectiveness of the power substances. Many power substances are found to be identical with thunderbolt and thereby suggest that their use in the rituals can cause killing and death to the individuals aimed at.



## References

1. The dogs are used in China in apotropic practices from ancient times, cf. Feng H. Y. and Shryock J. K. 'The Blackmagic in China known as Ku', JAOS, vo. 55, No.1, p.3.
2. According to Frazer, the animals like goat and buffalos are used in the rite of transference of diseases like cholera and plague to the enemies after being duely charmed and sent towards enemies, *The Golden Bough*, p.565.
3. *The Golden Bough*, p. 229; blood and flesh of the sacrificial animal are regarded as having magical powers, cf. Toy C. H. 'An early form of animal sacrifice' JAOS, vol. 26 (first half) p.140.
4. Cf. Keśava's Paddhati on KauSū.47.24.
5. Cf. Caland's tr. on KauSū.47.47-49, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p. 166.
6. For the wide use of hair in magical practices see *The Golden Bough*, Pp. 233-236; hair along with some other substances belonging to human body are believed to be magically potent and used in blackmagical practices, cf. Stutley M. *Ancient Indian Magic and Folklore*, p.92; Mauss M. *A general theory of Magic*, p. 47; Skeat W. W., 'Malay Magic', p. 570; Saligmann Kurt, *Magic Supernaturalism and Religion*, Pp. 16,17.
7. Blair C. J., 'Heat in the RV. and AV.', AOS vol. 45, p.108.
8. For the use of parasitic plants and trees in various magical rites see *The Golden Bough*, pp. 658-659.
9. Cf. *Vedic Ritual*, p.111.
10. For the *bādhaka* sticks put on the fire in this rite see Caland's tr. to KauSū.48.26, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p.169.
11. cf. *Vedic Ritual*, p.111.
12. see Keśava's Paddhati to KauSū.48.8 and *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p.167; where Caland also mentions it in his tr. of the same text.
13. The word *āhva* in the list of the trees in KauSū.16.14 means *Palāsa*, cf. Darila's commentary and *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p. 35.
14. In KauSū.48.24 the amulet called *tārcha* is possibly made out of *tṛcha* which Caland finds difficult to translate, cf. *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p. 169, f.n. 13. But according to Sāyaṇa and Keśava this amulet is made out of *palāsa* wood, cf. Sāyaṇa's introduction to AV.6.37 and Keśava's Paddhati to KauSū.48.24.



15. Cf. *Vedic Ritual*, p. 109.
16. According to Sāyaṇa the *bāṇāparṇī* plant is also known as *pāṭhā*, Cf. *Altindisches Zauberritual*, p. 122, f. n. 17.
17. See Sāyaṇa's comm. To TA.4.39.
18. Cf. AVPariśiṣṭa.31.9.1; reeds are used in magical rites with the formulas from 'surpu' series of Egyptians, cf. Stutley M., *Ancient Indian Magic and Folklore*, p. 95.
19. *The Golden Bough*, p. 201.
20. For remains in general see Malamoud C., 'Observations sur la notion de 'reste' dans Le brahmanisme', WZKSA - 16, 1972, Pp. 5-26.
21. The white horse when given as a sacrificial gift is dangerous, cf. Caland's tr. to TMB. (PVB.) 16.12.4, p. 447, f.n. 1.
22. See Sāyaṇa's comm. to ṢaḍVBr.4.2.24.
23. For the apotropaic nature of water see 'Magic' (Vedic) by Macdonell, *ERE*, vol. 8, p. 317, *Vedic Ritual*, p. 126, for the use of water thunderbolt against enemies see Shende N. J., 'Foundations of Atharvanic Religion' BDCRI, 1947, p.232.
24. Cf. 'Blackmagic in China known as 'Ku'', *JAOS*, vol. 44, No. 1, p. 8; for the practise of blackmagic by means of food in other countries see *Webster Magic*, p. 72.
25. Cf. 'Blackmagic in China known as 'Ku'', p. 9.
26. For these rites performed with stones see *Vedic Ritual*, pp. 136-137.
27. Cf. *Ancient Indian Magic and Folklore*, p. 95, (quoted from *Magical Medicine*, by Maclean Una, p.140). Such practices are also found in Malay, see *Malay Magic*, p. 568.
28. For the use of salt in blackmagical rites see *Vedic Ritual*, p. 139.
29. *Vedic Ritual*, p. 44; also *Webster, Magic*, p. 67.
30. For the use of black colour against demons and evil spirits see 'Charms and Amulets' (Indian) by Croke, *ERE*, vol. 3, p. 444; this colour is associated with sorcery, cf. Tambiah, 'The Magical power of words', *Man* (NS.), Pp. 203-204.
31. cf. *Vedic Ritual*, p. 45.
32. According to Sāyaṇa red and blue colours stand for the colours of fire because it is blue in smoke and red in flame.



## 6

## ANCILLARY FEATURES OF THE ABHICĀRA RITES

In this chapter there will be discussions on some ancillary features of the vedic abhicāra rites and some peculiar manual activities carried out in the same. One general belief among the primitive people is that the mental position of the performers of magico-religious rites has some impact on the effects of these rites. Thus the mental activity stands parallel to the verbal and manual activities of these rites. In the performance of Vedic rituals the ritualists, it is noticed, often put emphasis on the mental position of the performer and instruct to know or think of something while performing different rites. Similarly the performers have to carry out some peculiar manual activities in course of their blackmagical rites on account of which the blackmagical effects of these rites are supposed to be increased. Such activities are considered to possess some sort of magical significance. These are done in order to eradicate, destroy or bring some harm to the enemies of the performers. There are some rites to be performed in a particular direction, on a certain place and at a certain time. In the following lines a detailed study of such ancillary features is made.

Mainly two types of mental activities are prescribed in the Vedic blackmagical rites. These are knowledge and thought. By simply knowing something the knower is supposed to bring various harms on his enemy. Similarly by thinking about the enemy the performer is said to bring some blackmagical effects on the foe.

In the course of description of various sacrificial rites



the ritual texts use to narrate stories in order to give justification to different injunctions made by the ritualists. In connection with many such stories a remark is given that he who knows the contents of a story gets the same result which is obtained by an individual in the story. The knower of such stories is also said to bring harm to one's enemy. The following few examples will make the point more clear.

There is an *ekāha soma*-sacrifice called *prtanājī*t prescribed in JB2.91. Regarding this sacrifice the text narrates a story as follows – the gods while contending with Asuras in the years and these worlds desired to win the battle and saw this *ekāha*. By performing this they won the battle. This knowledge is said to lead one to win over one's enemy in the battle. In context of the *ekāha* called '*vighana*', one story is given in JB 2.141-Prajapati created gods, Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas. He gave them all these words and the sacrifice. Later on he created Indra and made him lord over all of them. When Indra approached them they did not agree to this arrangement. Indra saw this *ekāha*, performed it and drove away all those were contending with him in this regard. This knowledge enables the knower to drive away one's hateful enemies. In context of the *ekāha* called *durāśa* a story runs thus – the gods while contending with Asuras resorted to their house chaplain Bṛhaspati and requested him to find out a device by which they can make the Asuras unable to reach up to them while they will be performing sacrifices. Bṛhaspati beheld this one day sacrifice called *durāśa* (difficult to reach) and gave it to the gods. They performed it and the Asuras could not reach up to this or failed to follow the same. The knowledge of this story is said to help the knower in thriving himself and making his rival worse (JB 2.99,ŚŚŚ 14.32.1).

According to some stories one who knows the characteristics of a rite can defeat his enemy. The silent praise (*tūṣṇīmśamsa*) constitutes a part of the *ājyaśāstra* in a



soma-sacrifice. A story narrated in AB 2.31 describes the characteristics of this praise as follows- whatever the gods did in the sacrifice the Asuras also did, they were of even strength and were not discriminated. Then the gods saw this silent praise and praised with it which the Asuras could not follow. The silent praise is a silent essence (*tūṣṇīm sārāḥ*) and is identical with thunderbolt. The gods raised it against the Asuras who could not counter it. Then the gods hurled the same at the Asuras and smote them away. The knower of this is said to become prosperous and his rival who hates him is defeated. The Adhvaryu priest at the dawn of the night preceding the pressing day of a soma sacrifice gives an order to the Hotṛ priest – “O Hotṛ, recite the morning litany (*prātaranuvāka*) for the gods who are coming towards the sacrifice in the morning”. His order indicates that the morning litany is recited for the gods and not for any other beings. This point is supported by this following story – Prajapati, being the Hotṛ priest, recited the morning litany. Gods and Asuras both resorted to the sacrifice thinking themselves – “for us he will recite, for us”. But Prajapati recited only for the gods and then the gods prospered and the Asuras were defeated”. The person who knows this is said to be prosperous and his rival who hates him is supposed to be defeated. Similarly in AB 3.39, there is a discussion on the characteristics of *agniṣṭoma* through a story. The gods undertook battles with the Asuras. Agni was not willing to accompany with the gods in this battle. When he was requested to join by the gods he replied – “if I am not sung to I shall not follow you, sing now to me”. Then the gods praised Agni and he followed them. Becoming three rows and in three columns he went to battle in order to conquer the Asuras. He made the metres (*Gāyatrī*, *Triṣṭubh* and *Jagatī* related to the three services of the *Agniṣṭoma* sacrifice) the three rows and the pressings were the three columns. He defeated the Asuras invincibly. This knowledge leads the knower to be prosperous and the rival of the knower to be defeated.



The etymologies of some ritual terms like the names of *sāmans*, *stotras* or any other ritual terms are given through certain stories and the knower of such stories is said to afflict his enemy with blackmagical harms. For example, while discussing about the *yaudhājaya sāman* which is to be used in the midday *pavamāna* laud, a story is given in JB 1.122 – Indra, the winner of battle (*yaudhājīvan*) saw this *sāman*. And as the winner of the battle saw this, it is named after him as '*yaudhājaya*'. He who knows this is said to conquer his rival without battle. Similarly, etymology of the name of a *sāman* called *raurava* is found in the following story – in the battle of gods and Asuras Agni heated the Asuras and thus being heated they cried out (*arudan*). That is why this *sāman* is called '*raurava*'. He who knows this can heat his enemy (JB 3.184). A story gives the etymology of the ritual term *ājyastotra* in the following manner – the gods wanted to conquer these worlds from the Asuras, they saw this *ājyastotra* and chanted on it. Since, they conquered (*ājayan*) these worlds by chanting this it is called '*ājyastotra*'. This knowledge helps the knower to conquer his hated rivals (JB 1.105). In another story, one finds the etymology of the term '*adābhya*' that stands for a *graha* or soma-cup. The story runs thus – whatever the gods did in the sacrifice the Asuras also did the same. Seeing this the gods caused the metres and the pressings to find support inside the *adābhyagraha*. Which the Asuras could not follow and were defeated. As the gods deceived (*adabhnūvan*) the Asuras with the help of this cup it is called *adābhya* or *undeceivable*. The person who knows this is supposed to deceive his rival and his rival deceives him not (TS 6.6.9.1). Another interesting story is found about the *Vedi* or the sacrificial altar, Gods and Asuras both coming from Prajāpati contended for this world. The gods placing Viṣṇu, the sacrifice, at their head went to the Asuras and asked them to give share from the world. But the Asuras agreed to give only that much portion of the earth as much as Viṣṇu could



cover by laying down his body on the earth. Viṣṇu was a dwarf and the gods having laid down him eastward enclosed him in all the three sides with metres. After doing some ritual performances they obtained the entire earth. Because they obtained (*samvīdanta*) the entire earth by means of it the sacrificial ground is called *Vedī*. For this reason the theologians say that the altar is as great as the earth. Further it is also said that he who knows this, wrests likewise, the entire earth from his rivals and excludes them from their share on it (ŚB 1.2.5.1-7).

Sometimes the theologians describe the details of some rites and remark that the knowledge of the same yields blackmagical results. Thus the procedure of reciting the *sāmīdheni* verses is given in TS 2.5.7.5 that the priest should join the last half of the preceding verses with the first half of the following verses. This is considered as the elbow (*aratni*) of the *sāmīdhenis*. The person who knows the elbow of the *sāmīdhenis* is supposed to put his enemies in his elbow. In a soma-sacrifice the *sāman* called *svadhur* is to be chanted in the second *prṣṭha* laud. The procedure of chanting the *sāman* is given in JB 1.144. One should not chant it either loudly or slowly. If chanted loudly it will be considered as if chanted by means of the finale (*nīdhana*) belonging to one's rival who is better than one (the chanter). If chanted slowly then it is considered to be chanted by means of the finale belonging to one's rival who is inferior to one. This earth and the atmosphere are its hurts (*dhūr*). This knowledge leads one not to be hurt by others because who so ever hurts the knower is himself hurt by this *sāman*. Thus the details of this ritual knowledge is said to be useful for the blackmagical results.

The *puruṣamedha* sacrifice is a five days sacrifice and is compared to a barley grain. The barley grain is comparatively fat in the middle and thin towards both the ends. Likewise, in the *puruṣamedha* sacrifice, the third (the middle day) is the longest among all its five days so far the



ritual procedure is considered. It is an *atirātra* day (over-night-rite). The second and fourth days are *ukthya* days and the first as well as the last days are the *jyotiṣṭoma* days. This sacrifice is also compared to these worlds. These worlds have lights on both sides. In one side Agni (the sacrificial fire) and in the other side Aditya (the sun). This sacrifice has also lights (jyotis) on both sides in the form of *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifices. With regard to the second, third and fourth days of this sacrifice it is metaphorically said that the body is surrounded by food. The *ukthya* is food and *atirātra* is body. Therefore the body (*atirātra*) is surrounded by food (*ukthya*). This knowledge of the characteristics of the *puruṣamedha* sacrifice is said to lead the knower to repel his hateful enemy (ŚB 13.6.1.9). At the time of making any offering five utterances are to be uttered by the priests namely Adhvaryu, Hotṛ and Āgnīdhra priest. These utterances are—

- (1) *āśrāvaya* (do thou proclaim) uttered by the Adhvaryu in order to give order to the Āgnīdhra priest to utter '*astuśrauṣaṭ*',
- (2) *astuśrauṣaṭ* (be it proclaimed), to be uttered by the Āgnīdhra,
- (3) *yaja* (utter the *yājyā*) uttered by the Adhvaryu while giving order to the Hotṛ to recite the *yājyā*,
- (4) *ye yajāmahe* (we who utter that *yājyā*) to be uttered by the Hotṛ and his assistants,
- (5) *vaṣaṭ* (the expression '*vaṣaṭ*') uttered by the Hotṛ priest at the end of the *yājyā* verse.

These five utterances are called the strength of the metres. The person who knows this prospers himself and his foe is defeated (TS 3.3.7.2). In all these above cases one notices how the simple knowledge of certain ritualistic details is considered to create harmful results magically.

Stories are narrated in the Brāhmana texts regarding the performances of some sacrifices and who knows these



stories as well as performs these sacrifices can destroy, defeat or conquer his enemies. A forty-nine-nightrite is described in TS 7.4.7.1 where a story is found as follows-Saudāsas were the descendants of Sudās who slew Vasiṣṭha's sons. By performing this forty-nine-night-rite Vasiṣṭha defeated Saudāsas and won offsprings. The person who knows this and performs this sacrifice is supposed to defeat his enemies and win offspring. Another story is told about the fifteen-night-rite. Indra was, as it were, loose and unfixed. He was afraid of the Asuras and ran upto Prajāpati. Prajāpati gave him this rite of fifteen-nights as a bolt. With the help of this sacrifice Indra overcome and conquered the Asuras and attained prosperity. Those who knowing this perform the some sacrifice of fifteen-nights they are supposed to overcome their enemies and attain prosperity (TS 7.3.7.1). In course of the discussion about *cāturmāsya* sacrifices it is said in MS 1.10.5 that the gods and Asuras were in this world. Prajāpati desired to destroy the Asuras and create offspring. He saw these *cāturmāsya* sacrifice, performed these and after destroying Asuras created offsprings. The person who knowing this performs *cāturmāsya* sacrifices is said to prosper with cattle and offsprings and destroys his enemies (KS 35.10). A special *iṣṭi* is meant for a person who has rivals. The gods performed this *iṣṭi* and repelled the Asuras. In this they offered a cake on eight potsherds to *Agni pravat* and thereby repelled Asuras who were in front of them. In this they also offered a similar oblation to *Agni-vibādhavat* and *Agni-pratīkavat* and thereby could repel the Asuras who were around them and behind them respectively. The person who knows this and performs this *iṣṭi* is supposed to repel his foes who are superior to him, suppress the foes who are equal to him and does not allow the foes who are inferior to him to be equal (TS 2.4.1.4; KS 10.7). In these cases one finds the knowledge and performance together help the performers to destroy or defeat the enemy.



The knowledge of stories on some other rites along with their performances lead the performers to cause harm to their enemies and following are some of such examples from the ritual texts. The *upasad* offerings are to be offered daily two times in a soma-sacrifice. The gods performed these offerings twice a day, in the morning and evening and discarded Asuras from these worlds. The knower of this by performing these offerings twice daily in his soma-sacrifice can discard his rivals from these worlds (MS 3.8.4.; KS 24.10; GB 2.2.7). In each pressing of a soma-sacrifice the sacrificial cakes (*puroḍāśa*) are to be offered (five *puroḍāśas* in the morning pressing and four *puroḍāśas* in each of the other two pressings). It is said in MS 3.10.5 that the gods by offering cakes in the three pressings could get their support in three pressings and made the Asuras defeated. The knower of this story by performing the offerings of *puroḍāśas* in three pressings is supposed to prosper and his foes are defeated. In context of a grass-bush thrown out of the altar of the N and FM sacrifices towards rubbish-heap a story is told in MS 4.1.10 and KS 31.8. There was a demon called Araru who was sleeping stretching his body all over the earth. From the earth Indra discarded him and he fell on the heaven. From the heaven also Indra discarded him. The person who knowing this narration flings the grass-bush from the altar, he makes the sacrificer enable to discard his rivals from these two worlds. In context of the sprinkling of the high altar in a soma-sacrifice, a story is told in MS 3.8.5. The high altar becoming a lioness went apart from the gods and Asuras who were engaged in fighting with each other. Both of them tried to get back her to their own side. But she did not come back to any of them. When the gods requested her she put a condition that before offering the *āghāra* oblations they should sprinkle the high altar and that while sprinkling what ever one desires one should get it. The gods agreed to her condition, did the same and become prosperous while the Asuras were defeated. The person who knowing this



sprinkles the high altar is supposed to be prosperous and his foe is defeated. In MS 1.6.9 it is instructed that one who has enemies should establish sacred fires at the time of *citrānakṣtra*. In support of this opinion a story is narrated thus-wishing to ascend heaven the Asuras called *Kālakañja* were building the altar by putting bricks. Indra came to them in a brahmin's disguise and put a brick in that building. After completing the altar the Asuras started ascending heaven and Indra at that time pulled out his brick from the altar causing thereby the altar to break down and the Asuras to fall down. Among the Asuras two were at the top. They became two dogs at the gate of Yama. Those Asuras who were below became insects called *ūrṇāvabhis*. The brick which Indra had put and brought out became the *citrānakṣatra*. The rivals of the sacrificer who knowing this story establish fire on the *citrānakṣatra* become worse and are destroyed according to the above text. The *nānada sāmān* is to be chanted in the *ṣoḍaśi* laud. About this *sāmān* one story is given in AB 4.2 as follows – Indra lifted up his thunderbolt against Vṛtra, hurled at him and smote him. Being smitten by Indra Vṛtra cried aloud (*vyānadat*) and from his crying this *nānada sāmān* came into existence. This *sāmān* is said to be without rival and destroyer of rival. The person who knowing this uses this *sāmān* in the *ṣoḍaśi* becomes destroyer of the rivals and without rival. Three sacred utterances namely *bhūr*, *bhuvaḥ* and *svaḥ* are technically called *vyāhrtis*. These are described as “the truth of the speech” (*vācaḥ satyam*). Prajāpati saw this truth of the speech, he established fire with it and became prosperous. The person who knowing this truth of speech practises abhicāra he is said to be able to kill his enemies (TB 1.1.5.1). In all these cases the knowledge of certain ritual details is expected to be possessed by the performers and with this knowledge when they perform the rites they are said to become destroyer or subduer of their enemies in the ritual texts.



While carrying out some ritual activities one has to think of his enemy. This mental activity also leads one to harm the enemy. Thoughts are believed to be blackmagically effective. Thinking is considered as a medium of contact between the thinker and the object of thought and thereby becomes a means for the practise of contagious magic. It brings the magician a full control over the object of thought on which or whom he wants to bring magical effects. Mind is said to be more quick than speech (*mano vai vācaḥ kṣepīyaḥ*) (KS 19.10). Therefore, it is also believed that one can get the desired things more quickly if one thinks about them than speaks out. At the time of performing some Vedic rituals many times the performer is advised to concentrate his mind on his enemy so that he will be able to destroy him immediately.

One has to think of his enemy at the time of making oblations, putting fire-sticks in fire, throwing away some substances etc. While offering some oblation in the fire the priests are instructed to think about the enemy or any thing belonging to the enemy. A special animal sacrifice is meant for obtaining prosperity. In this a bull is to be offered to Indra, the holder of thunderbolt (*vajrin*). It is mentioned in MS 2.5.8 that on the strength of the word '*vajrin*' (the holder of thunderbolt), this sacrifice can be performed for the purpose of abhicāra also. In that case, while offering the bull to Indra one has to think about the enemy. Thereby it will be as if the thunderbolt is hurled at the enemy (MS 2.5.8; MŚS 5.2.10.37). Here it is to be noted that the purpose of this special sacrifice can be changed to abhicāra only by means of thinking about the enemy. Before the out of door's laud in a somasacrifice there is an offering rite called *pravṛt*. While performing it, if the priest hates the sacrificer he should think of the voice (*vāk*) (of the sacrificer). There by he is said to possess himself the power of speech of the sacrificer (TMB 6.7.8). While the silent offering is being made in the N and FM sacrifices the priest may think of the enemy of the sacrificer in order to



bring harm to him (BŚS 3.18). In these examples, one notices that thoughts accompanying these rites are supposed to lead to backmagical results.

During the performance of the fire-building rite there is a rite of creating fire in the pan and in order to catch the fire some faggots are put in the pan. While doing this the priest is instructed to think of the enemy of the sacrificer. He should put a stick of *tilaka* wood in the fire and while putting the same he should think of the enemy of the sacrificer and the enemy thereby, is supposed to die immediately (MS 3.1.9; ĀpŚS 16.10.2). According to KS 19.10 while the priest puts the faggot of an *aśvattha* wood in the fire in the pan he should think of the person whom the sacrificer hates. This causes the hated person to be covered up with fire immediately. But in HŚS 11.3.20 it is mentioned that when the priest puts the sticks of *aśvattha*, *vikāṅkata* and *śamī* woods in the fire he should think of the death of the enemy. In these examples, the thought about his enemy accompanied by the rite of putting fire-sticks in fire enables the sacrificer to put his enemy in fire magically.

The ritual act of throwing away some object being accompanied with the thought on the enemy, at times, causes blackmagical effects. Thus at the time of making the altar of N and FM sacrifices when the priest throws away the wooden sword towards the rubbish heap he is instructed to think of the enemy of the sacrificer (ĀpŚS 2.3.14; HŚS 1.6.22). During the *sākamedhaparvan* of the *cāturmāsya* sacrifices when the priest performs the *tryambaka* offerings he has to throw a *puroḍāśa* (sacrificial cake) on the heap of loose soil brought from the hole made by rats (*ākḥūtḥkara*) and is also instructed to think of the enemy of the sacrificer (ĀpŚS 8.17.10). Then the enemy is believed to meet death.

Some ritual details are described to be identical with thunderbolt and while dealing with such rituals if the performer thinks of the enemy then it is considered as if he



throws the thunderbolt on the enemy. For example, in the fire building rite when the priests and the sacrificer go for digging the clay with which the pan is to be prepared they take a horse with them. The priest, in this rite, has to rub the back of the horse uttering some formulas and simultaneously he is instructed to think of the enemy of the sacrificer whom he hates as if that hated enemy were below the feet of the horse. The horse is here said to be the possessor of thunderbolt. By thinking in this way while performing the rite the priest is supposed to lay the hateful enemy low with the help of thunderbolt. (TS 5.1.2.6; BŚS 10.2; ĀpŚS 16.2.10; HŚS 11.2.22). During the rite of establishing the sacred fires seven sacrificial materials (*sambhāras*) are to be poured down in the fire places along with the pouring down of some gravels. While pouring down the gravels (*śarkarās*) the priest should think of the foe of the sacrificer whom he hates and there he is said to hurl the thunderbolt at the hated person and kill him because the gravels are originated from the sparklings of the thunderbolt while it was hurled by Indra at Vṛtra (MS 1.6.3; MŚS 1.5.2.16; ĀpŚS 5.9.11; HŚS 3.3.5; BhŚS 5.5.11). While binding the three fold girdle at the waist of the consecrated sacrificer the priest should think of the enemy of the sacrificer. This girdle is identical with the three fold thunderbolt and thus the thought as well as the ritual action lead to hurl the thunderbolt at the enemy (MS 3.6.7; KS 23.4; ĀpŚS 10.9.14; HŚS 7.1.2). The Hotṛ priest while uttering the *vaṣaṭ* call at the end of his recitation of *yājyā* verse is instructed to think of the enemy of the sacrificer. As the *vaṣaṭ* call is identified with thunderbolt, by thinking so he is supposed to hurl the same at the enemy (AB 3.6; GB 2.3.2).

One comes across the action of thinking about the enemy in some miscellaneous rites also. Thus at the time of burying the heart spit (*hṛdayaśūla*) in an animal sacrifice the priest should think of the enemy of the sacrificer so that he will afflict the enemy with pain (TS 6.4.1.5; ĀpŚS 7.27.15).



After sprinkling the high altar on the middle *upasad*-day in the *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice the priest has to pour out the remaining sprinkling water towards the right side of the altar and at that time he should think of the enemy of the sacrificer. Thereby he is supposed to bring affliction (*śuk*) upon the enemy (TS 6.2.7.5; ĀpŚS 7.5.3). In the firebuilding rite to be performed by the sacrificer who wants to be established firmly, the priest at the time of piling the sixth layer has to put fire bricks namely 'over ladies' (*adhipatnīs*) and while putting the same he has to think of the enemy of the sacrificer. Thereby he is supposed to cut off the enemy from the deities and the enemy is believed to be ruined swiftly (TS 5.4.2.3; ĀpŚS 17.7.7). When the priest in a Soma sacrifice starts pressing the soma-stalks in the morning pressing with the help of the pressing stones he is instructed to think of the enemy of the sacrificer in his mind (ŚB 3.9.4.17; KSS 9.4.13). In these examples also one notices that thinking on the enemy in the course of the Vedic ritual is useful for destroying the enemy.

The performers of the Vedic ritual sometimes have to perform some peculiar actions which are described to be significant from the point of view of blackmagic.

The magical circles drawn around an object or animal have two fold implications. (1) It protects the encircled object or animal from the attack or influence of the evil beings who remain outside the circle. It is taken for granted that they are unable to cross the magical circle drawn by the magician. (2) It enables the performer to execute his full-power over the evil beings those happen to remain inside the circle as they are unable to come out crossing over the magical circle. This is a well known magical device in many parts of the world. In a soma-sacrifice when the priest and the sacrificer go for buying soma plants with a cow, on the way the priest has to perform a rite of offering on the seventh footprint of the cow. At first he has to draw a line around the footprint by means



of a piece of gold or by means of a horn of a black antelope. The formulas uttered at that time imply that by drawing the circle he encloses the evil beings and cuts their neck (TS 6.1.8.3-4; KS 24.4; BŚS 6.13; BhŚS 10.15.9-10). The same action of encircling is also seen when the priest first draws a line of circle on the spot where the proposed hole is to be dug for the erection of the *audumbarī* post at the central part of the *sadas* pendal by means of a spade (TS 6.2.10.1-2; KS 25.10; MS 3.8.8; BŚS 2.26), encircles the places meant for digging the sounding holes (*uparavas*) (KS 25.9; ŚB 3.5.4.5; MŚS 2.2.3.3); draws the outline of the hole meant for the sacrificial post of an animal sacrifice (ŚB 3.7.1.2). It is needless to point out that the evil beings are considered to be the supernatural enemies of the sacrificer.

Another significant magical action is to circumambulate any object by the priest with fire in his hand. This is known in the ritual term as *paryagnīkaraṇa* in the Vedic texts and originally meant for warding off the darkness and mischievous powers of nature.<sup>1</sup> Simple circumambulation (without fire in hand) is believed to have some magical significance and the fire is also known for its apotroptic nature. Thus one finds in the rite of *agnihotra*, while the milk is being boiled on the *gārhapatya* fire the priest is advised to go around the milk three times with some burning grass in his hand. Thereby he is said to repel the demons from the milk (TB 2.1.3.4; BhŚS 3.10.10). The priest should circumambulate the sacrificial animal to Agni and Soma with fire in his hand for three times so that the demons will be destroyed from the victim (MS 3.9.7). Similarly, in the N and FM sacrifices the priest has to circumambulate the *puroḍāśa* (sacrificial cake) with fire in his hand for three times in order to eradicate the demons from the cake (TS 1.1.8.1; TB 3.2.8.5; ŚB 1.2.2.13; ĀpŚS 1.25.8; BŚS 1.10; KŚS 2.5.22; BhŚS 1.26.4-5). In the *sautrāmaṇī* sacrifice after the fore offerings are made the priest carries the fire around the oblations by which he



is supposed to shutout the spiteful enemy of the sacrificer from the sacrifice (ŚB 12.9.3.9).

Touching is the most important activity among all the actions performed in the magical rituals.<sup>2</sup> The performer of a blackmagical rite simply touches the body of his enemy with any object which is considered to be harmful or believed to be endowed with magical power. Some times he touches the enemy by his own hands and utters some magical formulas. In the Vedic blackmagical rites also this peculiarity is found. Thus for example, in a soma-sacrifice after offering is made with the *pracaraṇī* ladle, the priest has to mix the remnants of butter in the ladle with the *vasatīvarī* water. Then he has to put down the ladle on the tip of the pole of the southern cart (oblation holder). If he wants to make any person impotent, then he should touch that person with this ladle before putting it down (ĀpŚS 12.7.1; BhŚS 13.5.12). Here, the ladle is thought to be magically powerful enough to bring harm to the enemy. While performing the fire building rite after dragging a frog, an *avakā* plant and *sara* grass (all tied to a long pole) on the fire the priest has to throw these objects on the rubbish heap. But, if he hates any one he is instructed to touch that person with these objects before throwing them (ĀpŚS 17.12.9; HŚS 12.4.3). In the N and FM sacrifices while preparing the oblations the priest throws away whatever grass etc. that has fallen on the rice (for *puroḍāśa*). If nothing is fallen on the rice he should simply touch the rice uttering the formula – “repelled is the Rakṣas...” (cf. VS1.9 (e)). Thereby he is supposed to drive away the evil spirits from the rice (ŚB 1.1.2.15). In this case it is believed that by means of the touching of a thing the same can be protected from the enemies in the form of evil beings. It is prescribed in Kau Sū. 36.39 that a performer of a blackmagical rite, in order to bring ill-luck on a certain woman should touch her face and heart uttering AV 7.114.1.

A gaze can bring contact between the looker and looked



one on the basis of which magical results are expected to be obtained. Looking and touching both come under the contagious magic. Looking is believed to enhance the effect of destructive action.<sup>3</sup> There are certain *abhicāra* rites found in the Vedic text in which the performer has to simply look at the enemy (or any other object) in order to bring harm to him (it). For example in Kau Sū.36.34, there is a rite prescribed to make a woman incapable of bearing a male child or to make her sterile. In this rite the practiser has to look at the hair-parting (*sāmanā*) of that woman uttering the hymn AV 7.35. Another practiser of an *abhicāra* rite has to look at the person against whom he wants to practise *abhicāra* uttering the verse AV 7.35.2 while that person comes towards the practiser (KauSū 48.36). If a soma-sacrificer wants to practise *abhicāra*, then at the time of drawing of the soma-juice in to different cups (*grahas*) in the morning pressing he should look at these cups. By this action of looking he is said to cut his foe from his expiration, inspiration, speech, skill, strength, eyes, ears, trunk, members and life which are said to be related with different cups (TS 3.2.3.4; BŚŚ 14.8; ĀpŚŚ 12.19.9). The practiser of a counter witchcraft rite, while counter acting the *krtyā* is advised to look at *krtyā* with a terrible eye or an unfriendly look (*amitra cakṣuṣā*) (Kau Sū.39.11). This action of looking has a close relation with magical formulas or verses.<sup>4</sup>

The magician priest sometimes smashes or dashes some object in order to cause harm to the enemy. This can be taken as a symbolical action of destroying the enemy. The objects in the hands of the performer is regarded as the representative of the enemy. Such actions constitute a part of imitative magical practises. Thus one notices, the practiser of blackmagical rite in order to bring misfortune to a woman has to crush a garland belonging to that woman (Kau Sū 36.16). If the husband of a woman wants to practise blackmagic against the paramour of his wife he should smash a bow of *bādhaka* wood on the footprint of an eunuch (Kau



Sū 36.36). Another practiser of an abhicāra rite is advised to smash a mushroom in to pieces (Kau Sū 48.10).

In another symbolical action found in the Vedic abhicāra rites to be performed against the enemy, the performer has to press his feet or any part of his feet on the ground. By this action it is believed that the enemy is pressed down or his breath is caused to be choked. For example, in the N and FM sacrifices when the priest recites the kindling verses, if the sacrificer hates anybody, he (the sacrificer) should symbolically crush him with his great toes uttering, "here do I crush so and so". Here the sacrificer has to press the ground forcefully with his great toes (ŚB 1.3.5.7; KŚS 3.1.7). After taking the viṣṇu-strides at the N and FM sacrifices, if the sacrificer wants to practise abhicāra he should move around pressing his ankle of his right foot on the ground and utter – "here do I entangle the breath of N.N., son of N.N. with heat" (BhŚS 4.21.3). Similarly after paying reverence to Sun (in the same sacrifices) if he wants to practise abhicāra, he should press his right heel on the ground uttering "here do I suppress..." (MS 1.4.3; ĀpŚS 4.15.3). At the end of *agnihotra* rite while the sacrificer worships the fire (*agniyupasthāna*) he has to press down his feet on the ground in different manners for different enemies. If the enemy is worse than he, he should press down with his heel, if the enemy is equal to him then he should press down with the right side of his foot and if the enemy is better than him then he has to press down the forepart of his foot (MS 1.5.11; KS 7.9; ĀpŚS 6.18.2).

The performers of various blackmagical rites have to perform certain actions facing or aiming towards some particular directions.<sup>5</sup>

Mainly blackmagical rites are performed in connection with the southern direction. For example, the abhicāra rite called '*āsurgavya*' should be performed towards the south of a village (MS 4.6.3). All the requisites of the domestic



abhicāra rites are to be put towards the south of the fire place according to (Kau Sū.47.5). The performer also has to face towards this direction (Kau Sū.47.6). In an abhicāra rite the performer has to throw a stone taking from a river (having no name) towards the southern direction.<sup>6</sup> (Kau Sū.47.32). While throwing water thunderbolt the performer should face towards the south.<sup>7</sup> (Kau Sū.47.31). Another performer of an abhicāra rite should cut the footprint of the enemy and take dust from the footprint and use it in the ritual only when he sees that the enemy is running towards south (Kau Sū.47.25).

In some other cases the performers are instructed to do certain actions facing or aiming towards that direction where they think that the foe is present. In such cases this direction is thought to be connected with the foe and whatever harmful action is done towards that direction is mystically thought to affect the foe. For example, after the *pravargya* rite the utensils are to be cleansed by means of an *udumbara* branch and then the priest should throw the branch towards that direction where the foe is thought to be present (ĀpŚS 15.16.4; HŚS 24.6.14; BhŚS 11.16.15). During the purificatory bath at the end of some *Śrauta* rites the performers should throw water towards that direction where they think that their foe is present and thereby they think that their foe is overthrown (cf. ŚB 12.9.2.6; 13.8.4.5; 14.3.1.27). During the performance of the *agnihotra* rite, there is an occasion for giving a gift of piece of silver to a hated person. If the hated person is not found then one should throw the gift towards the direction where he thinks that the hated person is present (ĀpŚS 5.10.5; HŚS 3.3.6). The Hotṛ priest while reciting the vaiśvadeva śāstra in a soma sacrifice has to think of all the directions except one in which the enemy is supposed to be present. There by he makes the sacrificer to appropriate the strength of his enemy (AB 3.31).

In order to create harmful effects on the enemy



sometimes unusual and artificial sounds are created. It is mentioned in AV 19.34.3 that the artificial noise (*kṛtrima nāda*) should become sapless by the *jangiḍa* amulet, an instrument against *kṛtyā*. From this it can be imagined that the practiser of *kṛtyā* creates some artificial sounds in order to bring blackmagical effects and in this formula an effort is made to nullify those effects. In another example, one produces sound in order to practise balckmagic. Before pounding the grains in the N and FM sacrifices the priest creates sounds with two millstones (*dr̥ṣadupale*). In this context it is said in TB 3.2.5.9 that one should sacrifice among his own relatives. So that the rivals of the sacrificer (among the relatives) may listen this sound created by the millstones and this will make them be defeated. This sound is described as the killer of Asuras. It is said to have entered into the weapons of the sacrifice viz. these two millstones. The Asuras were defeated when they heard this sound created by the gods (ŚB 1.1.4.17).

Two most significant factors of every ritual activity are place and time. They are believed to have impact on each happening whether good or bad. Due to this belief some places and time are considered by the ancient people to be good or bad, auspicious or inauspicious etc.<sup>8</sup> In other words, according to primitive people, there are certain places and periods of time in which something being done or performed yields good result and some other places or period of time bring bad results. Magicians are found to have taken advantage of these two factors. For benevolent magical results they usually take the help of auspicious place and time and for the sake of malevolent results they make use of inauspicious place and time for their performances. In the Vedic blackmagical practices also one finds the use of places and time which are considered to be unfavourable.

According to the texts of the AV certain places are magically powerful and harmful where abhicāra or any type of harmful rituals can be performed. For example, one



can practise *kṛtyā* in the following places – cemetery (AV 5.31.8; 10.1.18), field (AV 5.31.4; 4.18.5; 10.1.4,18), dwelling place (AV 5.31.5-8), well (AV 5.31.8), assembly (AV 5.31.6) etc.

In context of the selection of a suitable place for the performance of a Soma-sacrifice, it is noticed that various places are prescribed for various desires of the performers and certain places are prescribed for the performance of Soma-sacrifice with a desire to practise blackmagic. Thus one who has enemy should choose a place for the great altar which is called *āpta* or contiguous and that is a contiguous place where a road touches the sacrificial ground in such a manner that there will be no space in between for a wagon or a chariot to pass through. By performing sacrifice on this ground the sacrificer is said to conquer his foe (*āpnoti*) (TS 6.2.6.1-2; MS 3.8.4). According to KS 25.3 and KapS 38.6 that place should be contiguous towards the east. In KS 25.2 it is mentioned that, that place is called *vicchinna* or 'cut off' where a road runs just beside the ground. Whom the priest wants to make destitute of cattle and offspring, he should make him (the sacrificer) sacrifice on that ground.

If the priest desires to cause the sacrifice of a sacrificer to be seized by destruction (*nirṛti*) then he is advised to make the sacrificer sacrifice on a place which is seized by destruction. The place which is a bare patch of level ground is considered to be seized by destruction (TS 6.2.6.4). This is really a barren land where no plants or trees can grow. According to another prescription the priest should make the sacrificer to sacrifice on that place which is barren and without grass, if he hates him (the sacrificer) and thereby the priest is supposed to make the sacrificer devoid of cattle (KS 25.2; KapS 38.5). After the *pravargya* rite, if one wants to practise an abhicāra rite called *āsuriḡavya* then one has to practise it on a barren land outside the village according to MŚS 4.6.3.



Another type of place is also considered to be seized by *Nirṛti* (destruction) in which there are natural clefts and hollows (TS 3.4.8.5; KS 9.16; BŚS 14.18). On this ground an abhicāra rite with *rāṣṭrabhṛt* formulas is prescribed to be performed (TS 3.4.8.5; BŚS 14.18). Another abhicāra rite with *daśahotṛ* formulas is also said to be performed on such a ground (KS 9.16; HŚS 10.7.22). Moreover, the place for all the *grhya* abhicāra rites is said to have some natural hollows, according to Kau Sū 47.6. Such type of ground comes under the group of places where *kṛtyā* can be left by a counter practiser of *kṛtyā* (Kau Sū 39.35).

According to LŚS 8.5.5, the most infamous *Śyena* sacrifice (meant for abhicāra) should be performed in a burning barren land (*vidāhi sthaṇḍilam*) (cf. KŚS 22.3.2-3).

The ground from where the trees and plants have been cut off should be used as the sacrificial ground by a sacrificer who wants to practise abhicāra (MS 3.8.4; ĀpŚS 10.20.6-7; HŚS 10.1.3). This ground is technically called *nirvraska* and it is also prescribed for the performance of the *Śyena* sacrifice by KŚS 22.3.4-5 and LŚS 8.5.4.

That is a funeral place or burial ground as it were, which is sloping towards south (*dakṣiṇāpravāṇa*)<sup>9</sup>. According to Ṣaḍ VB 3.3.21, the land in which the southern corner is lower than any other part of the ground is suitable for the performance of a funeral ceremony and it is prescribed in Ṣaḍ VB 3.3.24 that all abhicāra sacrifices should be performed in such a ground. According to KŚS 22.3.6, such a ground is suitable for the *Śyena* sacrifice. Any *grhya* abhicāra rite can also be performed on this ground (Kau Sū 47.6). A counter practiser of *Kṛtyā* should leave the practised *Kṛtyā* in the land sloping towards the south (Kau Sū 39.25). The land which is higher at its southern side is prescribed for the sacrificial ground for a Soma-sacrifice of a sacrificer who has foes (MS 3.8.4).

Cow shed or any place related to cattle can be a suitable place for the practise of abhicāra. Some abhicāra rites are



prescribed to be performed in the cow shed of the enemy or on the path of the cattle of the enemy. In the abhicāra rite called *āsuriḡavya* to be performed after the *pravargya* rite, the performer should stand in the middle of the cows of the foe and utter three demoniac names of the cows (MŚS 4.6.3). In another abhicāra rite after the *pravargya* ceremony the sacrificer is instructed to go to the cowshed of the person whom he hates and bury there a plant called *śimijāvarī* uttering the formula mentioned in TA 4.39 (ĀpŚS 15.19.9; BhŚS 11.20.5). After the *śatarudrīya* offering during the fire building rite the priest should throw the leaf of the *arka* plant by means of which he has made these offerings on the path of the cows of the foe of the sacrificer. As a result this will lead to the death of cow which steps first on the leaf (TS 5.4.3.5; MS 3.3.4; KS 21.6; MŚS 6.2.4.5; HŚS 12.3.7; ĀpŚS 17.11.6).

Another suitable place for such practices is any ground inside the boundary of the enemy. A special *iṣṭi* which is to be performed with an intention to create an enemy to one's enemy should be performed inside the boundary of the enemy against whom the rite is aimed at (BŚS 13.18). This place is also proper for the practiser of counter *Kṛtyā* to leave the practised *Kṛtyā* after the prescribed rituals are duly performed (Kau Sū 39.25)<sup>10</sup>.

The cremation ground is considered as the most inauspicious place where the abhicāra rites can be performed. For example, the place for all the soma-sacrifices meant for abhicāra is said to be similar to the cremation ground (Ṣaḍ V Br. 3.3.24). A *grhya* abhicāra rite is prescribed in the Kau Sū 48.17 in which the performer is instructed to unfasten a leaf containing the dust from the footprint of the enemy on a cremation ground.

The places prescribed for magical practices include forest<sup>11</sup>. In the forest one should kindle fire and offer some faggots prepared from the trees called 'rival annihilating'



for the purpose of abhicāra (Kau Sū 48.1). In a battle rite also the performer is advised to put the faggots from the above mentioned trees in the fire kindled in the forest in order to kill the rival fighters (Kau Sū 16.14).

One also finds reference to performance of magical rites on an uneven ground. One special animal sacrifice meant for the practise of abhicāra is to be performed in an uneven ground according to ĀpŚS 19.16.8. A soma-sacrificer having foes should sacrifice in a land which is characterized as uneven. According to MS 3.8.4 and KS 25.2 this ground should have three higher places and these higher places must fall in between the proposed *āhavanīya* fire place and *havirdhāna* (the place where the *havirdhāna* carts are to be placed), *havirdhāna* and the *sadas* shed, the *sadas* shed and the *gārhapatya* fire place. From this description of the ground it can be inferred that this is an uneven ground having at least three higher places inside.

Some particular periods of time are considered to be harmful and various blackmagical rites are prescribed to be performed in them. Periods of time characterized by some hostile or inauspicious *nakṣatras* (the constellation through which the moon passes) are suitable for the practise of abhicāra rites (AV Pariśiṣṭa.31.8.5). These *nakṣatras* are *maghā*, *aśleṣā*, *mūlā*, *revatī* and *ārdrā* according to AV Pariśiṣṭa 31.8.6. In Kau Sū 47.11, the *nakṣatra kṛttikā* is said to be suitable for the practise of abhicāra. A person having foes while establishing sacred fires is advised to perform the same (*agnyādhāna*) in the period of the constellation *citrā* (MS 1.6.9; KS 8.1; ŚB 2.1.7.17; TB 1.1.2.6; ĀpŚS 5.3.13; HŚS 3.2.2).

Another inauspicious period is the dark half of the month (*kṛṣṇa pakṣa* or *aparapakṣa*)<sup>12</sup>. According to Kau Sū 47.11, this period is suitable for the practise of abhicāra (cf. AV Pariśiṣṭa 31.8.6). In connection with the optional offerings containing the utterance of the formulas called *daśahotṛ* etc. it is said in TB 2.2.3.2 that if the priest of a



sacrificer wants to make the sacrificer worse then he should make him sacrifice with these formulas in the dark half of the month.

Some other inauspicious times are mentioned in the texts which are considered to be blackmagical. For example, the evil doers are said to be active in the new moon day (*amāvāsyā*) (AV 4.36.3). It suggests that the rites against these evil doers should be performed at this time. According to Kau Sū 47.11 also this time is good for the practise of abhicāra<sup>13</sup>. A counter abhicāra rite is prescribed in Kau Sū 39.8 to be performed at night only. Generally night is regarded as dreadful and magical rites are often performed in this time<sup>14</sup>. From the text of AV. 14.2.65 it appears that one can practise *kṛtyā* at the time of wedding ceremony also.

## Conclusion

From the above given details it becomes clear that in Vedic abhicāra rites various ancillary features play an important role. The knowledge of the ritual details and connected legends, thinking of the enemy at the time of performance, some symbolical actions implying the act of killing etc., the directions, places and periods of time play significant role in the effectiveness of the blackmagical rituals in the Veda. The Vedic ritual is a complex phenomenon and all these details are taken into account for the purpose of highlighting their importance from the view point of the socioreligious as well as the magico religious study on these texts.

## Reference

1. Cf. Eggeling's f.n.1 in SBE Vol.12 (ŚB.pt.1), p.45.
2. Cf. '*Charms and Amulets*' (Christian) by Dobsehlitz E.Von, ERE. Vol.3, p.423.
3. Cf. '*Eye and gaze in the Veda*', p.19.
4. '*Eye and gaze in the Veda*', p.39, here Gonda mentions that due to



the close relation between the utterance of magical formulas and the act of looking the word 'cakṣurmantra' or 'eye-conjurer' is found in AV 2.7.5, which implies that looking is as effective as the utterances of magical formulas in magical rites.

5. The southern direction is prescribed for blackmagical rites in AV Pariśiṣṭa 31.9.3; for other references see Vedic Ritual, p.54. According to Macdonell the significance of the southern direction in magical practices is due to the belief that this direction is the abode of demons and ancestors, cf. 'Magic' (Vedic) ERE Vol.8, P.314.
6. Here the southern direction is not found in the text, but in Keśava's Paddhati and Caland's translation to Kau Sū 47.32, this is mentioned.
7. In this rite the direction (south) is specified by Keśava and Caland.
8. For the importance of particular place and time in the magicoreligious rites of ancient India cf Vedic Ritual pp.230, 241.
9. cf. Vedic Ritual, P.239.
10. cf. Vedic Ritual, P.239.
11. cf. Macdonell, 'Magic' (Vedic), ERE, Vol.8, P.314.
12. In the sūtra viz. Kau Sū 47.11, the word 'aroka' means dark half of the month according to Darila, but according to Caland the word arodha means the dark half of the month. See Darila's commentary on Kau Sū 47.11 and Altindisches Zauberritual, f.n. 10, P.160 and Caland's translation to Kau Sū 47.11 (in the same page).
13. The word avāpya in Kau Sū 47.11 stands for the new-moon day or amāvāsyā, cf. Altindisches Zauberritual, f.n. 10, P.160 and Darila's comm.. on Kau Sū 47.11.
14. cf. Vedic Ritual, P.246.



## 7

## PERFORMERS OF THE ABHICĀRA RITES

In this chapter it is proposed to discuss about the performers of the abhicāra rites. The importance of the magician in general is considered to be more than the importance of the magical rites he performs. In the words of Webster – “The magicians form the intelligentsia of primitive society. They live by their wits and their wits have to be keen if they are to satisfy all the imperious demands laid upon them by their fellows.<sup>1</sup> In the Vedic literature also the magician priests try to satisfy all the demands laid upon them. And among these were the demands of the blackmagical nature. They appear to fulfill these demands also.

In AV 19.34.2 the number of practisers of *kṛtyā* is said to be one hundred. Gods and human beings both are said to practise blackmagic (AV 5.14.7 and 19.35.5). In AV 3.9.1 one reads that the gods practise blackmagic against human beings by sending the evil beings like *karsapha* and *viśapha* towards them. Blackmagic is practised against the gods also. A story narrated in ŚB 12.7.1.1 gives information about the blackmagic practised against Indra. According to this story Indra slew Viśvarūpa, the son of Tvaṣṭṛ. Seeing his son slain, Tvaṣṭṛ brought some juice suitable for abhicāra in order to practise blackmagic against Indra and he withheld the juice from Indra. But Indra forcefully drank the juice. Thereby committing desecration of the sacrifice he went asunder in every direction and his energy or vital power clowed away



from his limbs. It is suggested through this story that blackmagicians could practise sorcery against the powerful gods also. It has been mentioned elsewhere how the gods are invoked through certain hymns and *yajus* formulas in order to bring various harms to the enemies or to help the magician priest in such activities. Thus although the gods, in principle, are superior to the blackmagical powers in general, they are at times involved in the practise of sorcery directly or indirectly.

The evilbeings like Asuras, Rakṣases, evil spirits etc. also sometimes appear as practising blackmagic against the human beings or sometimes working as the agents of the evil practisers who send them to do various harms to others. For example, *kṛtyā* (personified blackmagic) can be made and sent by Asuras (AV 8.5.9). just as the magicians the *piśācas* are said to injure men through well-cooked food, mixed food and ripe fruits (AV 5.29.6) or through drinking water (AV 5.29.8). By their evil practices the demons and the Gandharvas are said to make the embryo of a pregnant woman dead (AV 8.6.9, 18,19). The evil-beings called *kimīdins* can make the male baby female in the process of childbirth (AV 8.6.25). They are found to be sent by some evil practisers to do harm to others and they are directed by a counter practiser to go back to their senders (AV 2.24). Some other evil-beings called *sadānvāh* are said to be sent by some one against his enemies (AV 2.14.5). Similarly, in AV 2.24 some evil beings namely *śerabhaka*, *śerabha*, *śevṛdhaka*, *śevṛdha* etc. are mentioned who appear to be the agents of some evil practisers who can play them for blackmagical purposes.

One gets information from some Vedic texts about the human practisers of blackmagic. They are many including men and women (AV 1.8.1; 5.14.6) a *śūdra*, a king and a brahmin (AV 10.1.3). Some buried blackmagical substances called *valaga* are thought to be buried by various types of people. With relation to a *Śrauta* sacrificer these practicers



of *valaga* are said to be his *samāna* (equal) or *asamāna* (unequal), *sabandhu* (being of the same race) or *asabandhu* (being of another race), *sanābhi* (a kinsman or blood relation) or *asanābhi* (not being a blood relation), *sva* (one's own people) or *araṇa* (a foreigner), *sajāta* (related) *asajāta* (not related), *bhrātṛvya* (a hostile cousin) or *abhrātṛvya* (not being a hostile cousin), *sajanya* (not being a kinsman), *niṣṭyaḥ* (a stranger or a foreigner) or *amātya* (a minister or a companion) etc. (TS 1.3.2.1; KS 2.11; MS 1.2.10; VS 5.23). A mythological person called Aruṇi is said to have bewitched another person called Bhadrāsena Ajātaśatruvaḥ through an *iṣṭi* named *traidhātavī* meant for the practise of abhicāra (ŚB 1.4.3.11).

The Vedic priests also performed abhicāra rites. In this connection it must be noted that in the Vedic religion the performance of sacrifices is the central part. Due to the high handedness of the priests in the sacrificial performances it is considered as a priestly religion. The priests were the masters of the sacred science and the manipulators of the techniques through which the divine order and the order of the nature were supposed to be maintained properly. The highly organised priesthood occupied a key position in the society.<sup>2</sup> They were believed to have the power even superior to the gods. Because it was they who controlled the cosmic order by their sacrificial ministrations.<sup>3</sup> While thinking over the hymn from AV 3.19, Shende mentions that the priest who compels Indra to submit to the desire naturally believes that he is superior to Indra and those kings whose *purohita* he is, are sharper than Indra's thunderbolt.<sup>4</sup> (cf. stanza.4).

In the sacrificial performances the sacrificer is considered as a nominal head and master of the sacrifice in the sense that he bears usually all the expenditure of the performances and thereby becomes the sole receiver of all benefits of the performances. But the actual functions are carried out by the priests only. After appointing different



persons into the priestly offices the sacrificer himself acts according to their directions. Though their main aim is to perform various rites on behalf of the sacrificer in order to complete the sacrifice so that he gets the blessings of the gods and meets with good fortune, yet in practice, at times, they get in accordance with their desires and whims. They are found to indulge in various magical activities for or against the sacrificer according to their will. It is not at all surprising that the priests sometimes perform magic during the sacred sacrificial performances of the sacrificers. The Vedic sacrifice contained some magical elements throughout all the ages. To separate magical influences from the sacrificial ritual as difficult as to bring a clear distinction between a Vedic priest and a magician. That is why the priest is often considered as the descendant of magician.<sup>5</sup> On this point one may quote the words of *Bhattacharya* – “The priests were not always innocent Brahmins. They were past masters of magical practices which they gave effect to through the machinery of sacrifice by merely introducing a change in the normal sacrificial procedure. In RV 3.53.12 Viśvāmitra shows himself as a great wizard priest when he declared that the race of the Bharatas thrives under the protection of his charms”.<sup>6</sup>

‘ In the previous chapters it is already discussed that many harmful rites in the *Śrauta* ritual are prescribed to be performed by the priests. Among these blackmagical rites some are for and some are against the sacrificer. There is possibility on the part of a priest to practise *ābhicāra* against the sacrificer, if by any means he becomes dissatisfied with the sacrificer. According to a mythological story the seer Jamadagni, the house chaplain of Māhenas is said to have practised blackmagic against them by chanting a *sāman* called *saptaha* and thereby he is said to have killed their cattle seven by seven on each day (cf. JB 1.152). The priests are also found to go against each other among themselves. In order to enjoy the power, position and dignity obtained through priesthood



they indulge in rivalry with each other. The rivalry between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, in order to occupy the priesthood under the patronage of Sudās is implied in the stanzas of RV 3.53.21-24. These stanzas give an impression to the wounded pride and threaten vengeance against an enemy or a rival who had come into possession of some power or dignity which Viśvāmitra had previously enjoyed. Another evidence for this priestly rivalry is suggested in a rite performed during the performance of a Soma sacrifice. After offering the *manthin* cup on the *āhavanīya* fire, unlike the other pots, the priest should not take it to the *sadas* pendal. This cup is regarded as a cup of disease. If the priest who offers the juices in the cup hates anyone of the fellow priests then only he should take it to the *sadas* pendal for the sake of that priest alone. Thereby he is supposed to afflict that particular hated priest with disease (MS 4.6.3; ĀpŚS 12.23.12). According to TS 6.4.10.6, if the cup is taken to the *sadas* then the Adhvaryu priest becomes blind and is ruined.

Due to the possibility of internal enmity among the participants of the śrauta sacrifices, a particular rite called *tānūnaptra* has been introduced during the performance of a Soma-sacrifice. This rite aims at establishing unity among the participants and restricts them from going against each other. In this rite an oblation of *ājya* is touched by the sacrificer and all the priests and they pledge themselves not to injure each other (cf. TS 6.2.2; MS 3.7.10; KS 24.9; ŚB 3.4.2). It is mentioned in TS 6.2.2.2; MS 3.7.10 and KS 24.9 that among those who perform the *tānūnaptra* rite, if one hostiles first, goes to destruction. It may be, however, added that inspite of this preventive rite the possibility of mutual rivalry can not be totally excluded for ever and the possibility of practising sorcery against each other among the priests or performers can not be ruled out altogether.

In a Soma sacrifice priests are classified into four groups according to the Veda to which they belong. Four



priests namely Hotṛ belonging to the ṚgVeda, Adhvaryu belonging to the YV, Udgātṛ belonging to the SV and Brahman belonging to the AV head these four groups. The text of the AV is considered as the handbook of ancient Indian magic-practices. But it is important to note that priests belonging to all the Vedas can perform blackmagical rites. The abhicāra *mantras* and rites are found not only in the AV and Atharvanic literature but in all the parts of the Vedic literature. The Brahman, however, is glorified in the AV to have been kept in front (*purodadhire*) (cf. AV 5.8.5). This indirectly explains the term '*purohita*' who is the counter part of the Brahman in domestic rites. Brahman destroys all the evil beings and performs expiations in the course of ritual. Therefore, his mere presence is also sufficient to destroy the evil beings. In a soma-sacrifice at the time of the out-of-doors chant the Brahman has to join the procession of the priests and the sacrificer (*prasarpaṇa*). He is placed in the last position in the queue. In this connection it is remarked that he kills thereby all the evil beings (JB 1.86). If he commits any mistake during the sacrificial performances it brings considerable harm to the sacrificer. According to AB 5.33 the Brahman should remain silent when the morning litany is begun until the offering of the *upāṁśu* and *antaryāma* cups, when the *pavamāna* lauds are begun until their conclusion and in the case of *stotras* accompanied with *śastras* until the *vaṣaṭ* call is uttered. But in these occasions of the Soma sacrifice, if he utters speech then sacrifice itself is said to fail and due to that the sacrificer also fails. On account of his clear knowledge of Vedic ritual he is considered as the most important among all the priests of *Śrauta* sacrifices. Neither the Adhvaryu, nor the Udgātṛ, nor even the Hotṛ but only the Brahman priest, well versed in the AV is able to keep away the Rakṣases from the sacrifice<sup>7</sup> (AV Pāriśiṣṭa 2.2.4). Thus it can be said that the importance of the Brahman priest in magical practices surpasses the importance of any other priest employed in the *Śrauta* ritual in this regard.



The *purohita*<sup>8</sup> (house-chaplain) occupies a unique position in the performances of abhicāra rites in the Vedic ritual. He is expected to be a master of the ritual with Atharvanic *mantras*. In the entire sphere of domestic rites he becomes indispensable for a householder. He is adapt in witchcraft practice, he is physician, magician, priest, adviser, protector, philosopher and friend all in one. He performs all royal-domestic-rituals of the king who remains as a protégé to the former powerful with many formulas and magic rites. Even he has to go to the battlefield along with his patron-king to secure victory for him with the help of his magic power (cf. AV 3.19 and RV 7.18). A person belonging to the opposed *āṅgīrasa*-race (*praticīna āṅgīrasa*) is said to be appointed as the *purohita* in a ritual practise for the counter abhicāra (AV 10.1.6). With the help of the *purohita* an abhicāra rite namely "*Brahmaṇaḥ parimaraḥ*." is to be performed (cf. AB 8.28).<sup>9</sup> Thus he performs offensive as well as defensive abhicāra rites on behalf of the patron king. In the course of the discussions about the *purohitaship* it is mentioned in AB 8.24 that if the *purohita* is not appeased in body and not offered to and delighted, he repels the household from the world of heaven, from the lordly power, might, kingdom and the people. From numerous magical practices following the Atharvanic school which are prescribed in the Kau Sū., it is known that the *purohita* is not only useful to the king but he is equally helpful to the ordinary people including young and old, rich and poor as well as for women serving them in various capacities. And the office of the *purohita* has been always occupied by the priests belonging to the Atharvanic school due to their superior knowledge magical or rather of blackmagical practices.<sup>10</sup>

One finds very much similarity between the qualities of the *purohita* and the Brahman priest (of the *Śrauta* ritual). Both of them belong to the Atharvanic school. It can not be, however, said that these two priestly offices were occupied by one and the same person.<sup>11</sup>



Some of the performers of the *Śrauta* sacrifices used to be the practisers of abhicāra rites. During the performance of various sacrifices, as one finds, the sacrificer can perform some blackmagical rites by means of uttering formulas etc. or making particular movements. Moreover, he is the master of a number of Soma-sacrifices, special *iṣṭis* and animal sacrifices which are prescribed to be performed with an intention to practise blackmagic against his enemies. It is not difficult on the part of a consecrated Soma sacrificer (*dīkṣita*) to take part in magical practices because he is believed to have some magical power in himself. By closing his hand he is supposed to clasp the sacrifice and all the deities inside his hands (AB 1.3). By uttering the name of his hated person he is supposed to burn him (KB 7.3). After his consecration in a Soma sacrifice he is not regarded as a man rather he is considered to be a god (ŚB 3.1.1.8,10; 3.2.2.10, 19.22), the Lord viṣṇu (ŚB 3.2.1.17), the god Agni (KB 7.3), a *brāhmaṇa* (even if he is not a *Brāhmaṇa* by caste) (ŚB 3.2.1.40) or the sacrifice it self (ŚB 3.2.2.12). Thereby he is thought to be endowed with some supernatural powers of deities etc. On the strength of this power it is not impossible on his part to cause harm to his enemy magically through ritual performances.

Women could also perform magical rituals. General remarks and considerations on women in the primitive society is not much favourable. According to MS 1.10.16 woman is considered as 'perdition' as it were (*nirṛtirhi strīḥ*). They are believed to be a constant source of malignant power. Some women are believed to bring misery and witchcraft and even possess the evil eye. That is why they are thought to play a more important role in magic than in religion.<sup>12</sup> From the AV and Kau Sū. one comes to know that there used to be some women skilled in the blackmagical rites. According to AV 1.8.1 women can practise abhicāra. From AV 5.14.6 it is also known that women tried to produce *kṛtyā* (blackmagic personified).



Under the section called 'women rites' (*strīkarmāṇi*) in the Kau Sū. there are some blackmagical rites prescribed to be performed against women by their rivals. To win over her cowives a woman could recite a hymn RV 10.145 (= AV 3.18). In the Kau Sū. 36.19-21 a rite is prescribed for this purpose. A woman calls herself to be superior (*uttarā*) (AV 3.18.4) and overpowering (*sahamānā*) (AV 3.18.5) of her cowife. She herself digs one plant against her cowife (AV 3.18.1). In other societies also women practising blackmagic are not unknown. For example, among the Kaitish tribe a sort of magic is used by a wife to punish a man who had unlawful intercourse with her without her consent. A woman can also cause illness or death to one of her own sex by magic. Among the tribes in Kimberley division of Western Australia women can inflict illness on their enemies through magical means.<sup>13</sup> Among the Cewa people of Northern Rhodesia polygyny causes many deaths among woman. If a man becomes polygynist, he knows that, though he may survive for a long time, one of his wives will kill him at last or the wives will kill each other with sorcery. If the man loves one wife only, either the senior or the junior, the other one procures medicines and kills her husband and says – 'now we are all even'. Sometimes she kills her cowife and says – "now my husband will have to love me alone".<sup>14</sup> Thus the sexual jealousy is the main cause for women to involve themselves in blackmagical practices. Some Vedic blackmagical rites are also performed on account of sexual jealousy.

## Conclusion

In conclusion it may be said that the performers of Vedic sorcery were many and of various types. Kings or sacrificers, priests ordinary men and women with different motives, ambitions or out of jealousy used to perform blackmagic. Even references are available on the involvement of gods and seers in such evil practices both



for offensive as well as defensive purposes. The most significant practitioners are the Vedic Priests authorised to carryout *Śrauta* and *grhya* rituals. Among these priests also two are prominent, i.e. the *Brahman* in the *Śrauta* rituals and the *purohita* in the *grhya* rituals as versed in Atharvanic literature. Another important point to be marked in this context is that the group of priests appointed to perform various Vedic (*śrauta*) sacrifices occasionally practise *abhicāra* against their patrons and also against their fellow priests where as all their ritual activities, as a matter of principle, should be in favour of the sacrificer only and never against his interest.

### References

1. Webster H. *Magic a Sociological Study*, p.279.
2. Cf. James E.O. *Nature and Functions of Priesthood*, p. 224.
3. Ibid. p.224.
4. Shende N.J. '*Indra in the AV*'. PAIOC, 13th Session, pt.II, p.59.
5. Cf. Webster, *Magic*, p.298; Frazer J.G. *The Golden Bough*, p.90.
6. Bhattacharya V.C. "*Magical Kāmya-rites in the Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa*" IHQ, Vol.35, No.4, p.325
7. Karambelkar V W '*Brahman and Purohita*', IHQ, Vol.26, No.4, p.296.
8. For the magical importance of Purohita in general see Gonda, '*Purohita*', *Selected Studies*, Vol.II, pp.336-337.
9. see also Karambelkar V W, '*Brahman and Purohita*', IHQ, Vol.26, No.4, p.297.
10. Cf. Bloomfield M, *The AV and the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*, p.30.
11. Cf. Karambelkar V M, '*Brahman and Purohita*', p.296.
12. Mauss M, *General Theory of Magic*, p.120.
13. Webster, *Magic*... P.187.
14. see Marueick, *Sorcery in its Social Setting*, p.96.



## 8

## CONCLUSION

After having done a detailed study of the Vedic abhicāra rites one can make following concluding remarks. Magical elements are spread over all the Vedic literature especially all the ritual texts. Similarly, the blackmagical (abhicāra) rites are also spread all over the Vedic literature and not only to the Atharva Veda as is generally believed. Moreover, these harmful rituals are not limited to the sacrifices like *Śyena* which alone are taken into consideration by the *Mīmāṃsā* texts. There are two types of abhicāra rites, obligatory and optional noticed in the *Śrauta* literature. While sacrifice like *Śyena* etc. are optional, there are many *Śrauta* rites of abhicāra type forming a part of the regular Vedic sacrificial ritual. One has to perform these whether one wants to harm or destroy the enemy or not. One has to perform these the result of which is said to be harmful or destructive towards the enemy. Such rituals indicate that abhicāra was an integrated and essential part of the Vedic religion. As far as the Vedic texts are considered, it was an inseparable part of the Vedic religion whether one likes it or not.<sup>1</sup> Thus it forms a part of the so called high ritual tradition of the then people in which respected kings learned priests and even gods as well as seers are found to be involved.

The *grhya* (domestic) abhicāra rites in the Vedic texts further extend the scope of the abhicāra. The *Śrauta* ritual requires the formal establishment of the sacred *Śrauta*-fires and a lot of additional expenditure on the apart of the



sacrificer. It also requires the help of a number of priests. The domestic ritual on the other hand is less expensive and requires less assistance of priests. Any married man belonging to the three higher castes can perform the domestic rituals also. Abhicāra of the nature of domestic ritual thus must have been more popular and common in the Vedic age. Moreover, women could also perform these abhicāra rites against their cowives. In the society characterized by polygyny, abhicāra rites performed by women must have been quite a common phenomenon. All this again indicates how abhicāra was widely spread and deeply rooted in the Vedic religion.

Three types of Vedic *mantras* (texts) are used in the sacrificial performances and so also in the abhicāra rites, (1) hymns from RV and AV, (2) formulas from the YV. And (3) chants from the SV. These texts are considered to be very powerful and their use in the abhicāra rites is believed to be helpful in destroying the enemy. *Brahman* or the hymn power or the power of incantation is regarded as the supreme power in the hands of man. Thus a man having the Brahman power is considered to be the most powerful who can sometimes control even the gods through the same. The formulas from the YV are many times in prose and by nature these are either of the type of prayers, or commands or proclamations made by the performers who utter them. Whether prose or metrical, these formulas accompany the activities being performed and generally have a direct reference to the activities they accompany. The *sāmans* from the SV are sung in a particular way and some times few particular techniques involved in the chanting of some *sāmans* are also found significant from the view point of abhicāra. All these three types of texts are believed to be useful in destroying the enemies whether human or superhuman or unseen evil beings. Apart from these *mantras* some sacred utterances like *bhūh*, *bhuvaḥ*, *svaḥ* (*vyāhṛtis*), the *vaṣaṭ* call and *him* sound etc. are also believed to be



helpful in destroying the enemy. It is also to be noted that the recital or utterance or singing of the Vedic texts itself is considered to be leading to the desired result and the meaning of these texts may or may not be connected with the results.

The *Brāhmaṇa* texts prescribe the details of the ritual performances and try to explain their prescriptions in their own way. They of course deal with the abhicāra rituals also. They usually narrate stories the characters in which perform blackmagic and thereby argue that one who performs the ritual in a similar way can also get a similar result. In this respect the *Brāhmaṇas* of the *Sāma Veda* play an important role. Most of the important abhicāra sacrifices of Soma-type have been discussed in the Samavedic *Brāhmaṇa* texts like TMB, Ṣaḍ VB and JB. Possibly these sacrifices were originated in the Samavedic traditions.<sup>2</sup> Some of the important abhicāra rites such as throwing water thunderbolt, offering with *apāmārga* and some *iṣṭis* animal sacrifices of abhicāra type etc. are mentioned in the texts like AB, TB and ŚB. An interesting blackmagical rite called "dying-round the holy-power" (*Brahmaṇaḥ parimarah*) is discussed in AB 8.28. The obligatory abhicāra rites of *Śrauta* category are also found in the *Brāhmaṇa* texts. For, it is these texts which ascribe blackmagical results to these rites which form an essential part of the Vedic sacrifices which are otherwise not connected with sorcery. In the *Brāhmaṇa* texts one also finds sometimes statements to the effect that simple knowledge of certain ritualistic details or of their explanation given by the *Brāhmaṇa* texts leads to the obtainment of some desired results in which destruction of the enemy or any harm to be brought on the same is included.

The *Śrauta* sūtras and *grhya* sūtras further contribute to the development of the abhicāra rites. Many abhicāra rites and abhicāra sacrifices which are not found in the *Brāhmaṇa* texts or *saṃhitā* texts are dealt with in these sūtra texts.



For example, a special abhicāra rite called *āsuriyavya* is found only in the *Mānava Śruata Sūtra* 4.6. In the ŚSSū.14.22.2 a list of the names of eleven abhicāra Soma sacrifices is given some of which can not be traced in any other Vedic ritual text. Similarly, among the *grhya* texts the *Kauśika Sūtra* discusses a lot of *abhicāra* and *pratyabhicāra* rites. These *sūtra* texts have not only preserved the earlier tradition of the abhicāra rites but have contributed to the further development of it.

An important aspect of the abhicāra rites is the blackmagic performed by the priests against some of themselves or against their patron himself. Although the priests are expected to be co-operative among themselves, mutual rivalry or jealousy can not be totally avoided. Having no other means to harm or destroy their enemy they may take recourse to the blackmagic during the performance of a sacrifice. Similarly, the priests are employed by a patron-sacrificer in order to officiate in his sacrifice on behalf of him and for the benefit of him. But there can be some dissatisfaction (mainly due to dakṣiṇā or sacrificial gifts or any insulting treatments etc.) in the mind of the priests against their patrons and having no other power in their hand except the ritualistic one, they used to perform blackmagic against their employer by simply introducing some change in the prescribed way of ritual or by adding or omitting certain details in the ritual performances.

What can be the possible reasons of practicing abhicāra? The most important reason can be, in most of the cases, hatred or rivalry in general. One who hates another or thinks that he is being hated by another person may like to perform abhicāra against him. To be superior to one's neighbour or one's relatives (particularly brothers, cousins etc.) or to possess their wealth and the desire to make them poor can be another cause. As far as the kings are considered they perform abhicāra at the time of battle or at some other occasion in



order to defeat the other kings and acquire new land. Sexual jealousy is also another important reason. A man may perform abhicāra against the paramour of his wife or a woman may perform abhicāra against her cowife. A straightforward man may have some fear in his heart from enemies. He has to perform abhicāra lest his enemy should perform it before he does. Abstract evil beings were considered to be omni-present. Many rites similar to the abhicāra rites are prescribed to be performed against them.

Abhicāra in the Vedic age has both private and public utility. A king is expected to appoint a *purohita* (royal-chaplain) who is supposed to be master in the Atharvanic ritual practices. At the time of a national calamity the *purohita* takes the responsibility to perform defensive as well as offensive rituals. Thus through his abhicāra rites the kingdom or the nation is believed to be protected and become prosperous. He is expected to perform abhicāra and *pratyabhicāra* rites for these purposes. Abhicāra is thus believed to be useful not only to an individual but also to the nation as a whole. Private or public, abhicāra is always supposed to be useful to the weak people.<sup>3</sup> It gives them some courage to fight against their stronger enemy.

Blackmagic is a very common phenomenon in all the primitive societies. In the Vedic age also it must have been very commonly practised. But the important point is that the Vedic texts have incorporated it and have given it a form of the *Śrauta* and *grhya* ritual. Thus to certain extent they have given sanction to blackmagic. Although theoretically no body considers blackmagic as some thing worth practicing, it is found as an inevitable factor of the Vedic ritual practices. It is deep rooted in the nature of man. The Vedic texts have given a well defined form to blackmagic. They have developed both the theory and practise of it. Although abhicāra was condemned in later ages it was also questioned whether it can be called '*dharma*'



in its proper sense. Still abhicāra has continued to prevail in all the later post Vedic ages also. At one occasion *Manu smṛti* (11.63) ridicules abhicāra but at another context (11.33) it prescribes that a Brahmin (having no other weapon than speech) can practise blackmagic and kill his enemies.<sup>4</sup> Thus blackmagic as a weapon of a weak person is acceptable to the ancient Indian law texts. The study of Vedic abhicāra rites is thus a part of the study of Indian abhicāra in general and has significant implications from the point of view of the social and cultural history of India.

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3. Cf. Thite G.U., 'Abhicāra rites and Mīmāṃsā', (unpublished paper).
4. see Thite G.U., *Sacrifice in the Brāhmaṇa Texts*, P.183.



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